



THE INDEPENDENT

Wednesday 31 December 1997 45p (IR50p) No 3,495

INSIDE TODAY

**New Year's Eve:
Where to be seen...**
NEWS/3



**... and what to be
seen in**
FASHION/14

TODAY'S NEWS

Eddie George offers hope to business

Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, yesterday offered a ray of hope to businesses that have been hurt by this year's surge in the value of the pound, saying sterling's high value was not sustainable. But, in an interview with *The Independent*, he also warned the economy had to slow down but said there would not be another recession. Page 24

Tories query arrest

The shadow Home Secretary, Sir Brian Mawhinney, has written to the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner posing a series of questions about the arrest of *Mirror* reporter Dawn Alford who claimed she had bought drugs from a cabinet minister's son. Page 3

UVF leader buried

Murdered UVF leader Billy Wright was buried in his home town today after one of the biggest loyalist funerals in Northern Ireland for many years. Page 3

TODAY'S INDEPENDENT

This week there will be no Eye, nor the usual Plus sections. Television and radio are on the inside back of this section, the weather is on page 2, and the crosswords are on pages 30 and 32.

PROMOTION

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TELEVISION Page 31
CROSSWORDS Pages 30,32
WEATHER Page 2

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Arise Sir Elton, the Queen's Knight



Elton John is no more. Instead we must know the man whose most glorious moment was to sing *Candle in the Wind* at Princess Diana's funeral as Sir Elton, no less. Not even Sir Reginald, which is what he would have been if he'd kept his birth name.

The flamboyant rockstar, who was made a CBE only two years ago, expressed his "immeasurable joy"

yesterday, and said it showed an appreciation of all the hard work by everyone connected with the Elton John Aids foundation and other HIV/Aids organisations with which he was associated.

But the centrepiece of what was presented as the Prime Minister's "people's honours" list was awards for three heads for turning around failing inner-city schools or raising

educational standards. Many other awards went to teachers.

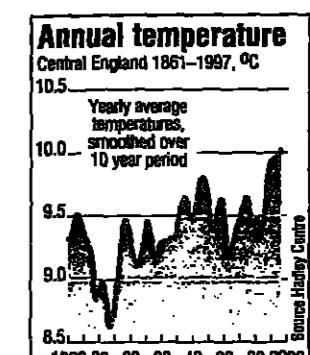
However, the award of a life peerage for the millionaire publisher Paul Hamlyn is likely to raise eyebrows around party funding, since he is said to have donated more than £600,000 to the Labour Party. Mr Hamlyn, however, is also a generous benefactor for charity and the arts, through his Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

Hertfordshire, the Malvern Hills and locations near Manchester and Blackpool.

In its first two centuries, many of the records were kept by clergymen and landed gentry with an interest in science. August, February and March had the most exceptional warmth over the past year. Despite the odd cold snap, the autumn has been on the mild side and so has December.

The three months of last winter, which the Met Office counts as December, January and February, were actually slightly colder than usual: 0.2°C below the long term average for this period.

As for rainfall, this past year has been drier than average in



England and Wales but not exceptionally so. With just one final day of data missing from 1997, the Met Office says 94 per cent of average rainfall will have descended. That puts 1997 nowhere near the top 10 driest years in a precipitation record going back over 250 years, and barely in the top 100.

Climate and weather have been the environmental bad news of 1997. Three weeks ago, in Kyoto, rich countries agreed they would cut their annual emissions of greenhouse gases by 5.2 per cent off their 1990 level. But that reduction will, it seems, be more than outweighed by increases from industrialised countries in the south such as India, China, Indonesia and Brazil.

Prescription charge plan for pill

Most women could face a £5.65 prescription charge on supplies of the Pill in the latest of Tony Blair's "tough choices" for the Welfare State. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says campaigners are warning Labour MPs it is a "tax on fertility".

Campaigners for free birth control will urge Labour MPs in the New Year to fight a proposal to impose prescription charges on contraceptives for most women.

Health ministers are considering ending the free prescription of contraceptives for better-off women as part of a

fundamental review of NHS charges. It is one of the "tough choices" which Tony Blair has said is facing the welfare state.

The Birth Control Trust is preparing a briefing note for MPs in the hope of forcing the Government to abandon the plan in the wake of the rebellion by more than 50 Labour MPs over cuts in one-parent benefits.

Some senior members of the British Medical Association support the introduction of charges for some women, because it believes it could help the Government reduce the overall cost of prescriptions. Charging for the Pill could save the NHS about £50m a year.

The Independent has learned that ministers have ruled out imposing new NHS charges for visiting the family doctor

and for "hotel" accommodation in hospitals, such as food and rooms, although Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, has encountered criticism for being unable to make

tions for prescription charges. The "passporting" of exemptions, allowing sufferers of one disease to qualify for free prescriptions for any other ailment are likely to end. Some well-off

announcing a freeze or a cut in the charge from next April.

Britain has one of the highest rates in Europe for unwanted pregnancies among teenage girls. Imposing charges on the Pill would run counter to the one of successive governments' key "health of the nation" targets for reducing teenage pregnancies.

Teenagers and women on Income Support, therefore, are likely to continue to get their contraceptives prescribed free of charge, but most other women will have to pay, unless the Government abandons the idea.

Prescription charges could be imposed on contraceptives as part of a general move to end widespread exemptions from the charge - raised 15p by the Tories in November last year to £5.65 per item. The Government may soften the impact by

**EXCLUSIVE
BY COLIN BROWN**

a public announcement before the review is completed in the spring. "A Labour Government was never going to introduce such charges," said a ministerial source.

Ministers are pressing ahead, however, with attempts to cut the £4bn drugs bill with radical changes to the exemptions for elderly patients could also face charges for the first time.

Prescription charges could be imposed on contraceptives as part of a general move to end widespread exemptions from the charge - raised 15p by the Tories in November last year to £5.65 per item. The Government may soften the impact by

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INDEPENDENT
INNOVATION

3/LEADING STORIES

Tories press for answers over drugs arrest

The Tory home affairs spokesman yesterday raised questions about the arrest of a journalist after she exposed the alleged drug dealing of a Cabinet minister's son.

Michael Souter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, says the affair has provided a new festive guessing game - who is the minister?

Sir Brian Mawhinney wrote to both Dame Barbara Mills, the Director of Public Prosecutions, and Sir Paul Condon, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, yesterday seeking reassurance that the case was being handled in the same way as any other.

They, like him, wrote "will want the public to know that these is no question that different rules are being applied in this case because a minister's son is involved".

He cited the claim that a police officer told the reporter, Dawn Alford, that the decision to arrest her - in connection with possession of the drug she was allegedly sold - had been taken out of his hands.

It emerged yesterday that the police arrested the reporter after asking the CPS for advice. But CPS sources dismissed suggestions that there had been political involvement in their advice as "nonsense". Police point out that the drug was not immediately handed over to them and they had no prior knowledge of the newspaper's plans.

Police confirmed yesterday that a second teenager has been arrested by police investigating the minister's son. The 17-year-old attended a London police station and was arrested in connection with alleged possession with intent to supply cannabis.

But the question remains - why have newspapers and broadcasters avoided publication of such tantalising information as the minister's name? The frantic Internet speculation and the rush for the latest edition of *Who's Who* to find out which ministers have teenage sons point up the intriguing question.

There seems on the face of it no real legal reason why the 17-year-old cannot be identified. The main law applying is section 49 of the 1933 Children and Young Persons Act, updated by a 1994 Act, which

forbids identification of juveniles concerned - as accused or victims - in court proceedings.

The crucial phrase is "proceedings". It seems hard to argue that proceedings have started in a case where the 17-year-old - who is said to have sold cannabis to the reporter - has been arrested, but not charged, and where no file has yet been sent to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Tom Walsh, editor of the periodical *Media Lawyer*, said: "In my view, there is no legal inhibition on naming this boy." He said he had never come across a case where a newspaper had been prosecuted for identifying a youth before court proceedings had begun. "I'm totally puzzled."

At best it would seem to be a "grey area" of law, something which has not usually inhibited newspapers in the past. Another obstacle may be the industry's code of conduct about naming of juveniles just because of a relationship with a prominent person - but there seems to be strong grounds for a public interest defence. The most likely reason for caution is a reluctance to antagonise ministers over an issue that could lead to tighter media controls.

If section 49 does already apply in this case, the maximum fine for breaching it is £5,000. Although there has been much talk about contempt of court, it is hard to see how the mere publication of someone's name can "seriously prejudice" their chance of a fair hearing in this kind of case. More serious perhaps is the publication of events surrounding the youth's alleged dealing in a pub in London before Christmas - which has already happened.

Again, if section 49 does apply, then the boy's parents in this case do not have the right to waive his anonymity, as rape victims can do. But the ban can be lifted by the court - in the interests of the juvenile. The Home Secretary also had the power, but it was removed by the 1994 Act.

A court now also has the new power to "name and shame" persistent youth offenders, under section 45 of the Crime (Sentences) Act which came into force on 1 October, a measure proposed by Michael Howard but enforced by Jack Straw.

According to experts, while a youth caught in possession of cannabis in Lon-

don would certainly get a caution and no more, the allegation of supplying - albeit with just £10 worth - means the matter could well go to court.

Scotland Yard have indicated they are preparing a file for the CPS. The CPS will consider first whether there is sufficient evidence to gain a conviction, then decide whether a prosecution is in the public interest; with juvenile cases they have to consider whether the harmful effect of a successful prosecution is disproportionate to the alleged offence.

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, says that where a youth is accused of supplying even small amounts of a drug, the case "almost certainly" proceeds to court.

A youth court can either deal with the matter immediately, perhaps imposing a small fine or a conditional discharge, or adjourn, normally for reports by a probation officer. This includes an interview with the youth - and his or her parents.

The court can then impose a community service order if it feels this is the best course.

IN
TOMORROW'S
INDEPENDENT

He had climbed
the greasy BBC
pole and
slipped. What
to do? David
Aaronovitch's
resolution
FEATURES

Dilemmas:
Virginia
Ironside's
response to the
wife who hates
her husband
smoking
FEATURES



Loyalist lament: Billy Wright's funeral cortège on its two-hour journey through the streets of Portadown yesterday

Photograph: David Rose

Anger and forgiveness as province buries its dead

Both sides of the religious divide buried their dead in Northern Ireland yesterday as the province braced itself for more trouble. In Coalisland, 1,000 people turned out for the funeral of Seamus Dillon, a former republican killer. Two hours later, a crowd twice that size gathered in Portadown for the funeral of "King Rat", Loyalist Volunteer Force leader Billy Wright. Steve Boggan reports.

It was dark by the time they put Billy Wright into the ground, his unmarked grave surrounded by thousands of mourners on a cold, dank day that did not bode well for peace.

For more than two hours his coffin had been carried through the hushed streets of Portadown, teams of bearers changing every few yards in line with his instructions.

Since his murder at the Maze prison last Saturday, and the Loyalist Volunteer Force's murder of Seamus Dillon, 45, in a retaliatory attack at a hotel in Dungannon, tension had been mounting.

The burial of the two victims yesterday did nothing to relieve it. Wright's family called for the resignation of Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, demanded a public inquiry into his murder and said legal action would follow. "Anything less [than a public inquiry] will permanently tarnish what credibility is left in the current British government," they said.

At Wright's funeral, photographers and cameramen had film torn from their cameras by leather-jacketed "stewards" while reporters were ordered to keep their distance. Businesses in the town were locked up from noon to 6pm after being leaflet-

ted by the LVF; they feared reprisals if they remained open.

The streets outside Wright's home in Brownstown were lined with thousands of mourners as his coffin was carried the two miles to Seagoe cemetery, following a private service inside the house. The cortège was led by a lone piper and women carrying wreaths and was flanked by a 20-strong guard of honour.

Some 50 yards in front was a black car which carried four men dressed in para-

military uniforms. The LVF kept its promise not to display weapons or uniforms at the graveside, but it said a number of volunteers had fired a volley in memory of Wright, 37, at Antrim on Monday night.

At Wright's graveside - in accordance with his instructions - the Reverend John Gray, a Free Presbyterian minister, officiated and Pastor Kenny McClinton, a former Maze prisoner, spoke about Wright before delivering a sermon on redemption and salvation.

"There is no doubt in my heart what-

soever that Billy Wright is in heaven at the feet of God," he said.

In Coalisland, where Seamus Dillon, 45, was buried, Sinn Féin MP Martin McGuinness was among the mourners. Fr Seamus Rice, the parish priest at St Mary and St Joseph's church, called for "dialogue and forgiveness".

He said Dillon's actions outside the Gengham Hotel last Saturday probably saved many lives inside. There is a belief among nationalists that the LVF had in-

tended to go inside and spray people with bullets. Three others, including a 14-year-old boy, were wounded.

"When Seamus Dillon was brutally murdered, he gave his life saving the lives of others," said Fr Rice. "I have no doubt about that." Dillon's mother, Bridget, issued a statement saying she had already forgiven his killers. As icy darkness fell across Northern Ireland, the majority of the population was hoping her words would be enough to quell the rising tide of anger.

Edinburgh pulls up the drawbridge as TV rivals dig in for Hogmanay

Edinburgh will become a walled city tonight to reduce the risk of a Hillsborough-style tragedy at its Hogmanay celebrations. But restricting the number of New Year revellers won't diminish the challenge facing rival television networks endeavouring to bring the party atmosphere to viewers across Britain, finds Media Editor Rob Brown.

Organising a party in a city of breweries is harder than it sounds. Orchestrating live television coverage of a jam-packed, open-air jamboree is even trickier in a part of the world where *al fresco* often means al freezing. "We're at the mercy of the elements" sighed Sandy Ross, executive producer of ITV's turn of the year show - and that was just yesterday's press launch he was referring to.

As co-presenters Anthea Turner and Philip Schofield braved wind and rain to pose for photographers in water-logged Princes Street Gardens, Mr Ross was certainly no illusions about the technical challenge facing his 150-strong outside

broadcast team. "We have to get our 16 cameras in the right positions because once the party gets under way there will be almost a quarter of a million people making sure we can't move them around."

Still, he's immensely proud of the fact that his crews will be out in the thick of the action rather than snuggled up in the castle like their less intrepid counterparts from the BBC. "We're going to be at the real party whilst they might as well have stayed in their studio," said Mr Ross.

Actually, the Beeb would have a bit of a job constructing a set to equal the Scottish baronial splendour of the Great Hall at Edinburgh Castle, which will form the hub of its Hogmanay show. Its props department would also be fairly pushed to match the spears, swords, and other assorted medieval weaponry which festoons its oak-panelled walls.

Such an armoury, mixed with copious amounts of alcohol, means that the audience has had to be carefully pre-selected. Liz Scott, who has been producing Hogmanay shows for more than two decades, said: "Audiences are always very dodgy at New Year."

The BBC has enticed American folk legend James Taylor to cross the Atlantic for tonight's show, but the emphasis will be on traditional Scottish entertainment.



Wired: An electrician working on the set of the BBC's Hogmanay broadcast from the Great Hall at Edinburgh Castle

Photograph: Colin McPherson

ITV's offering will be far more contemporary. Topping its bill is Texas, a rock band which hails from Glasgow.

The BBC's programme will also be beamed across the Continent on the cable channel BBC Prime. "Edinburgh has become the happening place at Hogmanay," enthused Liz Scott. "Any Hollywood di-

rector would die for a set like the heart of Scotland's capital city."

And that's a Glaswegian talking. Sandy Ross, an Edinburgh born and bred, naturally concurs, although he's not so sure that many movie-makers in Tinseltown would relish a cast numbering a quarter of a million and rather the worse for drink.

Dancing and fireworks for new year revellers

If you're planning a New Year's Eve without a Celtic theme, think again. More than ever, write James Francken and Clare Garner, the best place to ring in the new year is Scotland.

If Robbie Williams forgot to reserve you a seat next to the Spice Girls on his table at Dublin's POD nightclub, and your invite to the Prodigy's mansion in southern Ireland is not forthcoming, there are countless - perhaps preferable - alternatives for tonight.

The Scots know how to remember their old acquaintances, and the hottest ticket is, once more, Edinburgh's Hogmanay. Now a four-day festival, from 29th to 1st, it has become so popular that for the first time this year numbers are limited. Last year, 300,000 revellers crammed into the Royal Mile and Princes Street. Crash barriers and street railings collapsed, and more than 300 injured saw in the new year in hospital.

In an effort to avoid a repeat performance, this year 180,000 passes were allocated on a first-come first-served basis. They were gone within a week but are now being sold for more than £10 on the black market. Beyond the enclosed area, which will be sealed off from 8pm, there will be nightclubs, bars and concerts.

Glasgow's George Square and the adjacent Merchant City is hosting "Dancing in the Streets". There will be six dance stages, including a hip-hop event and Pink Stage for the thriving gay scene, as well as fireworks and bells at midnight.

In Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council is staging its first New Year's Eve Celebration Party at the City Hall, with assembled jugglers, firebreathers and an Eagles coverband, culminating in a "sound and light show spectacular".

Five thousand merrymakers will be at the Colours event at Manchester's Nymex Arena, where Radio One's Pete Tong will be beamed in live from the Ministry of Sound via computer link. In Durham, bell-ringers at the cathedral will be ringing in 1998 from 10.30pm to 12.30am.

In London, there is always Trafalgar Square - if you must. Most restaurants nearby will be booked up, but for those wishing to line their stomachs near the mele, there is always the West End Kitchen, where dinner for around £15 is being served until 11.45pm.

The London *Evening Standard* is setting off two tons of fireworks from Tower Bridge. For those not wishing to brave the elements, there is always the television. The *Sundown* display will be broadcast live on Sky News and you can choose between Carol of Smilie and Anthea Turner for live Hogmanay reports.

Diary of a deadly week on the roads

Each month, Britain's roads claim 13 times the number of people killed by AIDS. At this time of year, when the nation is alerted to the dangers of drink and driving, Jeremy Riggall and Randeep Ramesh examine the evidence of one damaging week on the roads.

It was a clear, quiet night in the Wiltshire countryside when a lone car shot through a roundabout and into a dry stone wall. The crash claimed the life of an 18-year-old waiter who had just finished a long shift at a busy restaurant.

Regulars knew the dead teenager, Philip, as a friendly, diligent waiter who had set his sights on becoming a restaurant manager. But, on 7 December, it appears that on the four-mile journey home, Philip's eyes wandered from the road and the car careered into a stone wall, flinging Philip through the windscreen.

A survey of 51 police forces conducted by *The Independent* reveals that there were 60 fatalities on Britain's roads in the first week of December. Motorway organisations say that the determining factor in most accidents is "driver error".

No death in the survey could be easily categorised, and some appear unavoidable. On the A123 in Cambridgeshire, 25-year-old Laurie Williams died in hospital three days after crashing her Ford Orion into a stationary Land Rover, whose owner was helping to move another car from a ditch. On the outskirts of York, pensioner Kenneth Lyons drove out of a car park on to the wrong side of the road and crashed into an oncoming lorry.

Nearly 3,600 lives were claimed last year. By compari-

son, five AIDS sufferers die each week and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease kills three a month. Governments have reduced the toll. Since the peak of 8,000 deaths in 1966, there has been a steady decline in deaths, despite the fact that the number of licensed vehicles has increased by 89 per cent, and the volume of motor traffic has more than doubled.

Drink driving is the cause of 20 per cent of road fatalities, and "inappropriate" speeding is a major factor in a third of all casualties.

Motoring organisations also point out that many roads are "death traps". The RAC says that "Britain's most dangerous road" is a section of the A614 in Nottinghamshire which has claimed 10 lives since 1995.

Campaigners say that much more could be done to deter reckless driving. In 1996, there were 3,598 deaths on the road but only 346 drivers were charged with death by "dangerous driving". Most are charged with careless driving.

In Nottingham last year, a child was killed by a car travelling at more than 45mph through a zebra crossing. A 34-year-old woman was convicted of careless driving, receiving a fine of £500 and no driving ban.

Mary Williams, chief executive of Brake, the road safety organisation, said: "The charge of careless driving should be dropped... We need a simplified charging system with dangerous driving, death by dangerous driving, driving and manslaughter".

The police are equally dissatisfied with the judicial system's handling of road fatalities.

A spokesman for the Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo) said: "We always hear about a government cracking down on drugs or crime. There are six hundred murders a year, but over 3,500 road deaths."

• National Charity for Road Crash Victims: 0181-964 1021.



Taste for danger: Motorists are being urged to concentrate fully on their driving, without the distractions of phones and food

M25 HEADS THE QUEUE OF BRITAIN'S TOP 10 ROADS TO HELL

Frustrated drivers have known it for ages, but now it is official – the M25 has the worst traffic jams in Britain.

Confirmation came from a survey of the country's most congested routes carried out by the Road Haulage Association.

After the M25, the next worst spot for jams was the M5-M6 interchange to the north-west of Birmingham.

Other routes best avoided included the M62 between Manchester and Leeds, the M4 near Newport in south Wales and the M80 between Glasgow and Stirling.

"This survey effectively acts a map of Britain's 'Roads to Hell,'" said RHA spokesman Daniel Hodges.

He added: "It shows there are now no areas of the country free from the social,

economic and environmental blight of traffic congestion.

"The 'congestion disease', which has gradually been clogging our nation's transport arteries over recent years, is now developing into a national epidemic."

The worst 10 routes for jams are:

1 The M25 (between J11 and J13 in Surrey, at J25 in Hertfordshire and between

J28 and J29 near Brentwood in Essex)

2 The M5/M6 interchange, north west of Birmingham

3 The M62 between Manchester and Leeds

4 The M4 surrounding Newport, south Wales

5 The M80 between Glasgow and Stirling

6 The A30 between Exeter and Honiton in Devon

7 The A1 western bypass,

between Newcastle upon Tyne and Washington in Tyne and Wear

8 The A63 from J38 on the M62 east of Hull to Hull Docks and M625 bridge in Humberside

9 The Hangar Lane gyratory system in west London

10 The A4 between Huntingdon and the M11 in Cambridgeshire.

Say no to food on the go

To the dangers of drivers chatting on their mobile phones has been added another threat – the munching motorists.

The RAC warned yesterday that slacking and steering had become rife, with drivers refusing to take proper meal breaks. Edmund King, the motoring organisation's head of campaigns, said: "People's busy lives now seem to preclude lunch breaks as they attempt to guzzle and go." The practice was extremely dangerous, he said.

RAC patrols have observed a wide range of eating experiences among motorists. One BMW driver was feeding a baby while driving around a corner. Another driver was eating a Chinese meal with chopsticks.

In keeping with the Christmas spirit, one motorist was trying to eat a full turkey leg while keeping on the road and one woman was spotted trying to pick mince pie crumbs from her cleavage. Another was eating tripe while negotiating a roundabout.

Mr King said: "We could hardly believe some of our patrols' observations. While the incidents mentioned may be amusing, the hazards they create for drivers and other road users should not be dismissed."

The perils of the eating motorist come in the wake of concern over mobile phone use in cars. Government research found that motorists using telephones, including hands-free devices, can be sufficiently distracted to be regarded as unsafe.

Baroness Hayman, the road safety minister, told peers in November that "there is an association between telephone use and increased accident risk".

Police in the West Midlands have begun a recent crackdown in which motorists seen using hand-held telephones have been issued with a £20 fixed penalty ticket or reported for prosecution.

— Louise Jury

Denial over ID cards

New smart cards with "digital signatures", developed to help self-employed people cut down on form-filling, might be extended to perform more complex functions including paying tax, and ultimately acting as ID cards.

After being launched earlier this month by David Clark, the Cabinet Office minister, the smart cards, which contain their own microchip, are also being tested to see whether they could be used for a far wider set of tasks.

But the Government yesterday denied that the cards represented the introduction by the back door of ID cards. "The Government is not developing an ID card," said a Downing Street spokesman. "No decision has been made on whether ID cards will be introduced. The benefits and disadvantages need to be considered carefully."

Civil liberties groups have been increasingly concerned that cards containing more personal information, including the new driving licences with a passport-sized photo, could become a *de facto* ID card. But a "smart ID card" would be significant because it might mean that a person could be tracked electronically as their card was used. The idea of a card with a "digital signature", effectively an uncrackable PIN code, is that it would allow people to pay taxes, claim benefits and apply for passports by filling in an electronic form in a payphone-like kiosk, into which they could plug their card.

The card, which could lead to thousands of redundancies for civil servants, is one of the key proposals expected to be included in the Better Government White Paper next year.

Peter Killefie, the public services minister, stressed that the cards would not be compulsory but admitted it could be difficult to operate in future without one. "If such a card was introduced for government purposes the civil liberties lobby would react very strongly because they would see it as the potential for an ID card. But these are some of the difficult choices that governments are going to have to take," he said.

A spokesman added: "The Government is committed to improving its services to the public and one of the best ways is by using the latest technology."

— Charles Arthur, Science Editor

Reform bill sounds final cut for the guillotine

The Government will begin its changes to the Commons in the New Year, with a deal over the Scotland Bill. Colin Brown, Chief Political Correspondent, says it spells goodbye to the parliamentary filibuster and the guillotine and hello to smart-card voting.

An extraordinary show of cross-party agreement will greet MPs when they return to the Commons after their New Year break, which is likely to herald the end for the filibuster and the guillotine.

Ann Taylor, the Leader of

the House, and the Commons negotiators for all the main opposition parties, including Gillian Shephard, Ms Taylor's shadow, the Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democrats have signed a joint motion agreeing to limit the time spent on each clause of the Scottish devolution Bill.

By keeping to a strict timetable, all the parties believe they will be able to achieve a better, more reasoned debate on the floor of the Commons on one of the most important constitutional Bills to be put through Parliament for a generation.

A cross-party select committee is expected to propose timetabling all Bills in the future. That would end the need for MPs to filibuster to put pressure on the Government over

single issues. Some MPs will argue that they are being robbed of one of their key weapons to hold up government business, but ministers would no longer need to impose a guillotine to cut off debate.

The move is the first important step by the Government in modernising the conduct of business in the House of Commons, and bringing the chamber out of the Victorian period and into the computer age. The Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, is studying more sensible changes which could mean an end to the practice in which MPs – including women – were expected to don a top hat to make a point of order during a division.

A collapsible top hat is kept in reserve by the Commons

badges messengers but wearers were often the butt of jokes from their friends – Dennis Skinner has been known to sing "Give me the moonlight" at those donning the top hat.

In an end-of-year radio interview, Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, said the Scottish parliament would not be a "Trojan horse to independence". He hoped the other parties in the Scottish parliament would concentrate on domestic issues when it sits in 2000, instead of pressing for independence. "My hope and my wish is that, when the parliament does meet... we should get down to looking at what we are doing about the problems of housing in Scotland, what we are doing about delivering our promises in the health service," he said.



Donald Dewar: Concentrating on domestic issues, not independence

Good year for grouse

The moorlands of England are alive as never before – to the "cackling" cry of the grouse as populations look set to boom.

One expert described the situation as "the best for decades".

A fall in outbreaks of disease is thought to be the reason behind the trend and it was welcomed by Royal Society for the Protection of Birds spokesman Chris Harbard.

He said: "It was predicted earlier in the year that this would be a good one for grouse.

"But we have no real way of knowing figures until we get reports about the shooting bags. Grouse numbers do fluctuate and it's nice to hear that they are up following some poor years."

Phil Pugh, North of England spokesman for the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, said: "Disease has been less of a problem than in previous years, and there is a mood of confidence that the present situation will continue into next season."

Grouse populations have also remained high in Scotland.

John Phillips, Director of the Heather Trust, said: "1997 was a good year for grouse, as predicted. In a number of places this season it was the best for decades."

DAILY POEM

Maenad

by Ruth Fainlight

Once upon a time
I ranged the mountains
with the rest, the best, arms
raised high, head thrown back,
bright brief breast bare, etc.,
etc. They said I looked
as if I had danced off the side
of an Attic vase.

My legs were strong. My nails were sharp.
My laugh was wild.

What happens next, after
frenzy and consummation,
after stumbling home to swab
away the blood, pick
dark hairs from teeth and tongue,
vomit goblets of fat and skin?
Time works the changes:
maenad – matron – crone – (who
still remembers how it felt;
everything).

This week's poems come from the five volumes shortlisted for the 1997 Whitbread Poetry Award. The winner will be announced next Tuesday, along with the other Whitbread winners for biography, fiction and first novels. "Maenad" is taken from Ruth Fainlight's *Signs Paper Blue* (Bloodaxe, £6.95).

Women's pay gap

The widening gap between the pay of men and women in the finance sector should be tackled urgently by employers, a banking union said yesterday.

Further evidence that female workers were being paid less came after Government statistics showed that women were earning 54.2 per cent of their male colleagues' basic weekly earnings.

The Banking Insurance and Finance Union said women's salaries had shrunk since 1995 and it called on employers to root out discrimination.

Jo Seary, of BIFU, said: "Far from catching up, women in finance are falling further behind in pay. That's very often because women are still largely confined to the lowest paid grades."

"Contrary to popular belief low pay is a serious problem in the finance industry – almost one in eight staff earn less than £4 an hour."

While women now outnumber men in the workplace for the first time in peace-time history, the Government New Earnings Survey said female managers experienced slower wage rises.

In 1993, women in senior positions earned 67.3 per cent of their male counterparts and that figure has now fallen to 60.4 per cent.

GPs warn on change

Plans to reform general practice could lead to more waiting lists, shorter consultation times and rationing, doctors' leaders warned yesterday.

Dr John Chisholm, chairman of the British Medical Association's GPs' committee, said that family doctors in the National Health Service were "very concerned" about moves by a government working party to find a formula to ensure that GP resources are fairly distributed.

He claimed that if recommendations, which include using GP consultation rates to determine cash allocations, were accepted by ministers it could mean that patients were put on hospital-type waiting lists to see their family doctor. But the Department of Health said that every patient was ensured access to a GP under law and work was already underway to ensure equal access to GPs across the country.

The working party was set up by the Department of Health earlier this year to look at ways of bringing about more equal distribution of GPs, their staff and resources. Recommendations are due to be made to health ministers in about eight months.

Dr Chisholm said that general practice could not be run in the same way as hospitals and had to be based on patient need. He and his colleagues are concerned that if money is allocated according to the number of GP consultations – one of the ideas being considered by the working party – it will lead to larger GP lists, shorter consultation times and longer patient lists for GPs.

He said: "General practice is demand led. We cannot have a situation where prescription pads are locked away and surgeries have to close 10 months of the year because GPs have already run out of money that has been allocated."

"General practice is the safety valve of the NHS and once you block it, the whole service is at risk. You can close a hospital, you can delay an operation, but you can't close down general practice. GPs' surgeries are the front door of the health service, and GPs must be there to react to demand that changes throughout the year."

مكتبة الأهل

Say no to
food on
the go

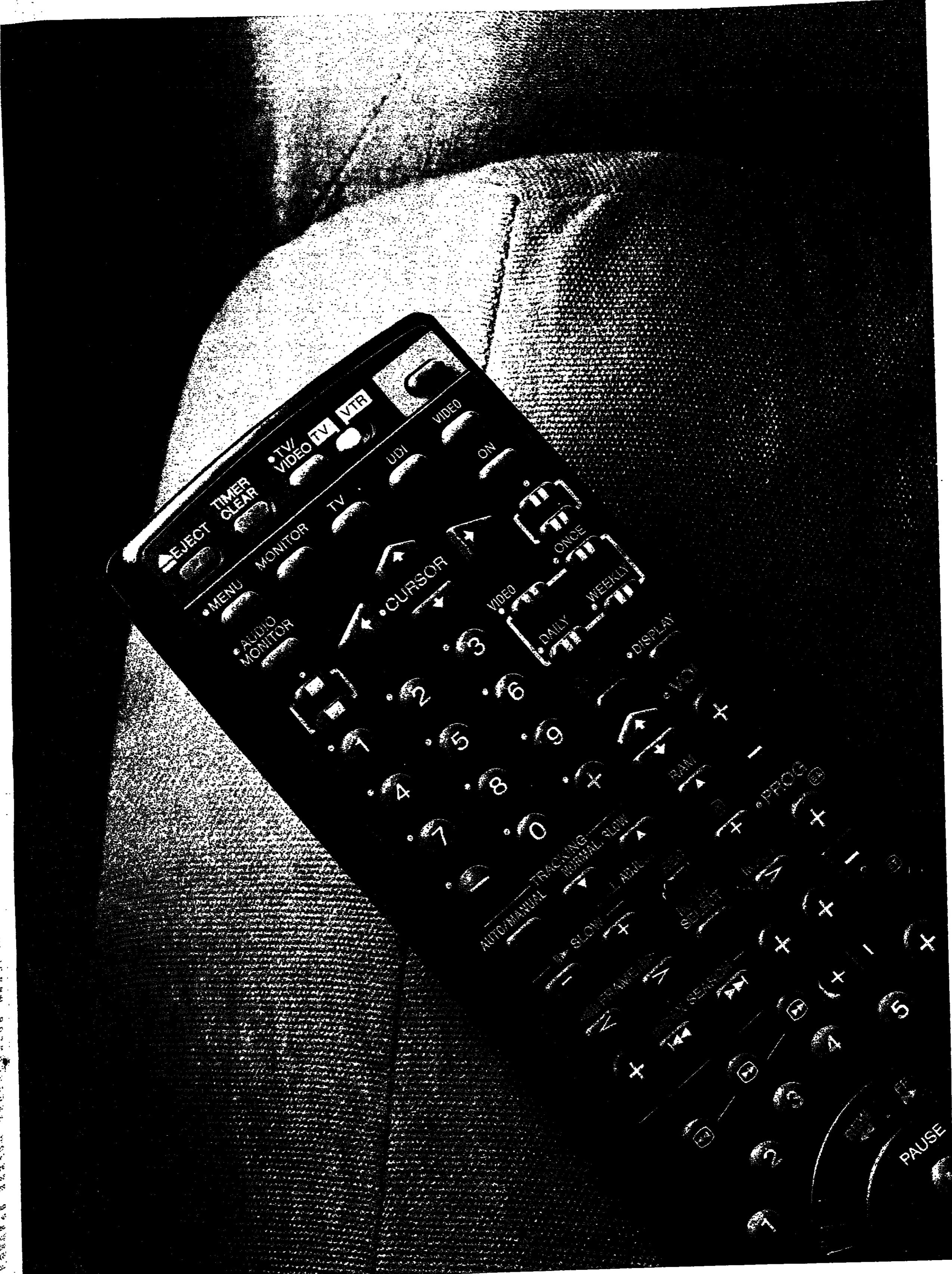
The dangers of driving
while eating have
been added another
warning to the list.
The RAC, which
is working with
the government
to take proper
measures, has
also issued a
warning to drivers
not to eat while
driving.

RAC patrols have
been increased to
check for drivers
eating while
driving. The
number of drivers
caught eating
while driving
has increased
significantly.

It is important
to remember
that eating
while driving
is not only
dangerous
but also
illegal.

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is not only
dangerous
but also
illegal.

GPs warn
on change



Wish things were written in plain English?

Thanks to new technology, the English language gains thousands of new words each year. Recent additions include 'wysiwyg', 'quaqua' and 'zift'. Few people know what they mean. (You can find out on p17.)

Supermarkets with a finger in every pie

As political donors, patrons of the arts and sponsors of public education and charities, the supermarket bosses are exerting influence over our lives even when we are not consuming their goods. Ian Burrell traces their web of power.

Now ensured that the public now saw supermarket chiefs as political animals as well as the people who sold them nice things and made their lives easier.

It was not, in fact, Lord Sainsbury's first foray into political patronage. In the 1980s, he had helped to finance the Social Democratic Party.

Other supermarket giants have strong links to the Conservative Party, under whose government they grew into the corporate giants they are today.

Archie Norman, chairman of Asda, is now Tory MP for Tunbridge Wells, and the company retains Lowe Bell, the public relations firm established by Baroness Thatcher's close adviser Tim Bell, for promotion and lobbying.

Safeway, under its previous name, Argyll Group, made a one-off donation of £30,000 to the Tories in 1992-93. Tesco was also linked to the Tories through former Westminster Council leader Dame Shirley Porter, daughter of the Tesco founder, Sir Jack Cohen.

In the arts, various branches of the Sainsbury family privately support the Sainsbury Wing at the National Gallery and the Sainsbury Centre for visual arts at the University of East Anglia. As a company, Sainsbury's sponsors community-based projects as part of its Arts for All scheme, mainly aimed at encouraging participation in theatre, music, ballet and opera.

The big four supermarkets (Tesco, Sainsbury, Asda and Safeway) have a combined annual turnover of over £40bn and make pre-tax profits of £2.1bn. Lord Sainsbury's private family wealth is estimated at £2.5bn.

The news of the Sainsbury chairman's political patronage immediately prompted questions about a possible hidden agenda. The supermarkets, it was observed, had been experiencing rebuttals from planning authorities over their proposals to build out-of-town superstores.

Prior to the election, Lord Sainsbury and senior representatives from Tesco and Safeway had met Tony Blair to complain about the tough new planning guidelines on out-of-town stores, imposed by the then Secretary of State for the Environment, John Gummer.

Since the election, Lord Sainsbury has been made a Labour peer and Sainsbury's has been given the go-ahead for a large-scale project at Richmond upon Thames which had run into local opposition.

Mr Blair said that to link the Richmond decision to the donation was "rubbish" and "ridiculous". Nevertheless, the

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Artistic licence: The Sainsbury Wing at the National Gallery, just one of the arts and community-based projects supported by the family

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

What next after superstores and 24-hour opening?

Men in baseball caps are trying to dress you up: Asda, once the loser in the supermarket race, has been revived with huge malls which sell everything from pizza and CDs to (quite) funky clothes. Jojo Moyes reports on a Northern success story.

You don't expect to see supermarket clothes in the fashion pages - let alone clothes from Asda. Yet in the past five years the once poor relation of supermarkets has overtaken Safeway in terms of market value and sales - with its "George" range of clothing

leading the re-emergence. The supermarket has even held talks about a merger with Safeway that would leave it as the dominant partner.

Two men are responsible: 43-year-old Archie Norman, the headline-grabbing chairman who went "part time" to become a Tory MP; and Allan Leighton, chief executive.

Asda was a latecomer to supermarket retailing. When Mr Norman took over, many observers thought the company was finished. As a result, Mr Norman had a huge personal stake in it: "I feel the company is part of me, and I am very devoted to it," he has said.

He is now attempting to do for the Tories what he did for Asda. A keen political animal (he was at Cambridge Uni-

versity at the same time as Michael Portillo, was chairman of the Conservative Association in 1975, and is now MP for Tunbridge Wells), Mr Norman has introduced some of his management concepts to the Tory party - as witnessed by the recent "bonding" weekend attended by William Hague.

"I don't believe at all in the classic British boardroom manager style," he has said. "The style of government should be open and politicians should talk to people as people at their level."

Mr Leighton, who now ef-

fectively holds the reins at Asda, spent 17 years at Marks & Spencer before moving through Pedigree Petfoods to Asda, where he became chief executive in September last year.

Between them, the two men have overseen a huge change in management culture. During the first phase, named "renewal" they took to calling the employees "colleagues"; abolished individual offices (even for the chairman); and introduced the wearing of baseball hats for people who didn't want to be disturbed.

After "renewal" came

TOMORROW

Where will the supermarkets go: More Calvin Klein in the aisles - or does the future lie with "Roboshop"?

"breakout", now succeeded by "formula for growth". Asda has 216 stores, most of which are bigger than the competition's at around 40,000 sq ft. The next push is for hypermarkets of 60,000 sq ft or so, to display George Davies' "George" brand of clothing to best advantage.

Mike Dennis, food retail analyst at Société Générale Strauss Turnbull, says that Asda's future lies in building up its "market hall" concept, whereby customers can visit a delicatessen, pizza place or other "shop" within the store, and feel they are getting a personalised service.

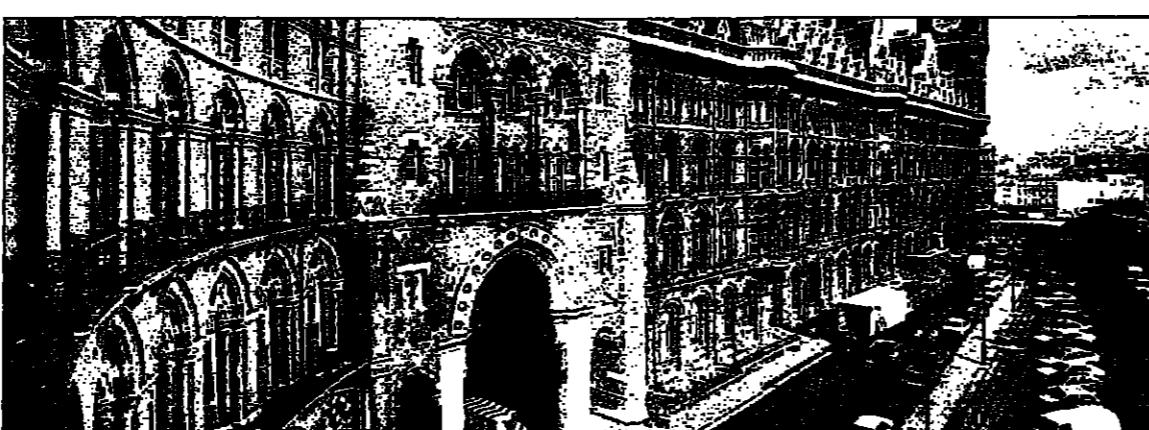
The decision to launch the George clothing range, says Mr Dennis, enables Asda to use its warehouse-sized stores to

mark itself out as different. "They're making parts of their in-store offer a unique reason to go to that store. If they can get you in on the George label, then you buy everything else there," says Mr Dennis.

"All retailers are trying to find a point of difference, and Asda has a large format store where they can do that with authority."

Asda is now moving into non-traditional supermarket areas, such as CDs and entertainment, as well as piloting 24-hour stores. This Christmas, it went one better and appeared to be expanding into religion. Stores throughout the land broadcast a service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury. From "George" to George Carey? It seems to be working.

Mysterious tale of the missing railway stations



Has rail privatisation brought progress? Only if you don't want to go to railway stations. Charles Arthur tries to crack the code to discover that most secret of facts: the address of Darlington railway station.

"Hello, this is the National Rail Enquiry Service, how can I help?" "Could I have the address of Darlington railway station?" "Just let me check. We haven't got the address."

"You haven't? But I need to pick someone up there and I've never been to Darlington. Do you have the phone number for it?"

"No. We don't have any phone numbers for stations - they're all ex-directory and we're not allowed to give them out."

"Er... would Railtrack have the number, then?"

"No - they just own the line. The train operating companies own the station."

Confused? Of course. Just when it seemed that the privatised rail world could not get weirder, it simply becomes Kafkaesque. Like M15, railways stations now don't ap-

pear in phone books for "security reasons". Apparently, train operating companies found that passengers (or "customers") kept ringing up their staff to find out information - such as how to get to the station.

Since privatisation, every railway station has moved ex-directory - so that now you can't find a phone number for London's largest stations, such as Victoria or St Pancras.

The problem is compounded for would-be travellers who know only their points of departure and destination, rather than which company they will be travelling with - since the latter information is required before tickets for the journey

can be booked. Robert Heller, author of *Catch-22*, would be pleased.

During the (true) conversation above, the NRES operator suggested calling the train operating company - which, for the (randomly-chosen) journey from London to Darlington was Great North Eastern Railways.

I dialled the number NRES had given me.

"Hello, Guardian Royal As-

surance..."

"I'm sorry, I thought I was calling GNER."

"Oh, we've been having problems with this since at least mid-December. The number the enquiry people have been

giving out is wrong. There's a digit wrong." She gave me an amended number. I called it. Nobody answered.

The Office of the Rail Regulator said that usually the complaints from rail users arise when they already have the railway station's number and call it, but are referred to the NRES - which is meant to be connected to Railtrack's computer, which should know exactly how close to schedule each train in Britain is.

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surance..."

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Customers allowed to keep old telephone numbers

Telephone users will be able to keep their old numbers when they switch telephone companies under an agreement announced yesterday. The move is expected to spur on more households to swap companies in a bid to get a better deal by removing the hassle of having to change numbers.

The agreement covers all the major telephone companies who will have new terms written into their licences obliging them to let customers keep their numbers if they defect to rival companies.

Until now, only BT has been obliged to let customers keep their numbers.

Since June last year, more than 150,000 telephone numbers have been switched between companies - now running at around 5,000 a week.

Don Cruikshank, director general of the industry regulator Ofcom, said there was clearly demand for "number portability" and said today's move was good news for phone users.

Porn station to be outlawed

The Government is within days of formally confirming its plans to outlaw a French-based satellite porn channel, it emerged yesterday. A spokesman for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport said a decision by Chris Smith, the Secretary of State, would be "announced shortly".

A ban on the selling and advertising of the smart cards required to receive the programmes seems certain, after the Independent Television Commission asked in October that the Government proscribe the Eurotota channel.

The ban will have to be on the marketing of the decoding equipment because it is not possible to stop the programme being beamed into Britain from another country.

It is not expected that action would be taken against existing British viewers of the channel who already have the necessary unscrambling devices.

But ministers are thought to believe the equipment ban will deny the channel the revenue it requires to continue.

Gales blow in for New Year

Gales which battered the country over Christmas were set to return last night, ushering in a stormy start to the New Year.

Experts said the storms would be less severe than those which hit the country last week but warned they could gain force over the next few days.

The north-west and Scotland were expected to be the hardest hit, with rain and winds of up to 70mph forecast. Temperatures were expected to be mild - up to 12C (54F) - but will feel colder because of the strong southerly winds.

Partner questioned as fears grow for missing mother

A mother of four last seen going out to buy Christmas presents eight days ago was still missing yesterday.

Lisa Blunt, 23, vanished after leaving her Nottingham home for a last-minute shopping trip on 22 December.

Police said her partner, Vincent Shilton, 29, was being voluntarily questioned by de-

tectives looking for Ms Blunt. Officers have also been searching the couple's home and garden in Raymede Close, Bestwood, Nottingham, where neighbours said it was would have been out of character for her to leave her children before Christmas.

Ms Blunt has lived at the address for three years after moving from the Clifton Estate, on the other side of the city.

Neighbours said Mr Shilton moved into the three-bedroom semi 18 months ago and the couple had a baby daughter, Kylie, in June this year. It is thought that he left his wife and their three children after meeting Ms Blunt in early 1996.

Ms Blunt's children, Jade, aged five, Dale, four, Daniel, two, and baby Kylie, are being cared for by relatives.

Neighbour Patricia Johnson said Ms Blunt was "devoted to her children" but added that she had become withdrawn in recent months.

Mr Shilton appealed yesterday for Ms Blunt to get in touch. "We just want to know you are all right," he said.

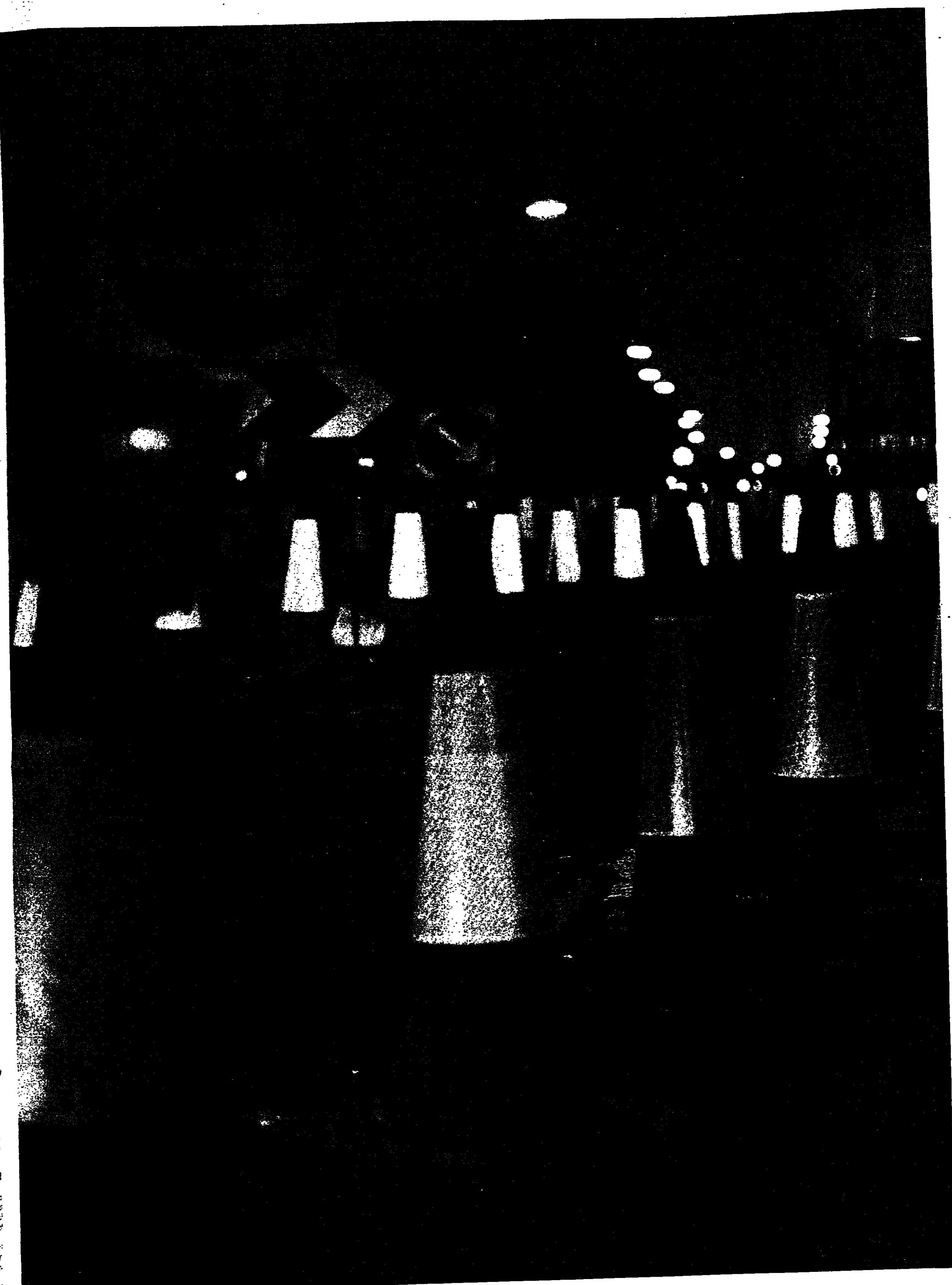
Her on the Friday before Christmas and she looked really down in the dumps ... We get more worried as time goes on. Now we hope that she has got post-natal depression and that she will come back.

Mr Shilton appealed yesterday for Ms Blunt to get in touch. "We just want to know you are all right," he said.

A Nottinghamshire police spokesman stressed that Mr Shilton had not been arrested and had given his permission for a "thorough examination" of the house and garden.

He added that they were "increasingly concerned" because Ms Blunt had now missed Christmas and her son Dale's fourth birthday on Monday.

جئنا من الامم



Wish your queue was moving quicker?

The average person spends a year and a half of their adult life queuing. No wonder we get agitated.
How long before someone does something about it?

opening?

customers allowed to keep telephone numbers

station to be outlawed

blow in for New York

Russians on red alert as rouble is reinvented

Nerves are jangling in Russia over tomorrow's introduction of the new rouble. As Phil Reeves reports from Moscow, it comes at a jittery time.

Amid deep suspicion and considerable grumbling from those who will use it, Russia's kopek will tomorrow be brought back to life after an absence of some six years.

The resurrection of the coin comes with the re-denomination of the rouble, which has acquired an ungainly trail of zeros after tumbling spectacularly in the first half of the decade.

From New Year's Day, the rouble will lose three of its noughts. A pair of jeans that now costs the draft-sounding 400,000 roubles should, if all goes well, retail at a more respectable 400. With an anticipated six roubles to the dollar, the kopek will be worth a mighty one-sixth of a cent.

But that "if" is, in the eyes of many Russians, alarmingly large. Distrust of the government runs deep when it comes to money.

Two previous changes in the currency in the last seven years were badly mishandled and led to panic. Millions will never forget how hyperinflation of up to 2,600 per cent a year wiped out their savings, vapourising an estimated total of \$17bn.

Since then, the government has restored the rouble to stability by maintaining it within a corridor, a policy that has helped pull inflation down to less than 12 per cent this year.

But it has not been easy, particularly in the last few months. The fiscal crisis in South-east Asia sent foreign and domestic investors scurrying back into the safer

arms of the dollar, prompting Russia to pour several billion dollars of its reserves into defending the rouble.

When Mikhail Gorbachev tried to reduce money supply in January 1991 by ordering the population to hand in 50- and 100-rouble notes, there was chaos, largely because he only gave them three days to do so.

The Yeltsin administration is trying to make a better fist of things. The old roubles will circulate alongside the new for a year, and it will be possible to exchange them in banks for five years.

The government has run an advertising campaign, commandeering revered Soviet-era actors to issue televised assurances that there is no cause for people to be alarmed.

Russians remain sceptical, however. The reaction of Marina Dobkina, 49, a school director, was typical: "Nothing will change for the better. Prices will go up. Though all actors announce on television that nothing will change, prices are growing just before the event. The leaders never miss a chance, do they?"

The Central Bank's new notes look very like the old ones. This is sensible, though dull. Over the years, Russia has had some eccentric currency. In 1896, the 100-rouble note was printed in a rainbow of colours, with Catherine the Great in the centre. In 1919, when the Bolsheviks harboured ambitions of world revolution, the Soviets produced notes with the hammer and sickle on the front with the slogan "Workers of the World Unite" in Russian, Chinese, Japanese, French and Italian. Lenin didn't appear on money until 1938.

The new Russia has produced notes boringly ornamented by the national flag flying over the Kremlin.



Currency affairs: Two women shopping in Moscow, where concern is running high over plans to re-denominate the rouble

Photograph: Lehtikuva/Rex

White House caught out over envoy's mission to Iran

Reports that a senior US congressman was travelling to Iran to contact Tehran's moderate leaders prompted denials in Washington. Mary Dejevsky says it may herald a thaw in relations between the two countries.

The reports that President Bill Clinton had sent Senator Tom Lantos as a special envoy coincided with the opening of the first natural gas pipeline between the former Soviet republic of Turkmenistan and Iran. This event illustrates the difficulties faced by the United States if it persists in trying to isolate Iran.

There had been rumours in Washington of unofficial contacts between the US and Iran since before Iran's new president, Mohammad Khatami, extended his olive branch earlier this month, expressing respect for the "great people of the United States". Washington had

denied there had recently been unofficial contacts between US and Iranian officials in Europe.

This week's reports were more substantial. The official news agency of the United Arab Emirates quoted "informed sources" as saying President Clinton had sent Senator Lantos, a Democrat from California, to Iran to assess whether hints of changes in Iranian foreign policy were genuine.

The senator's office was initially uncommunicative and the White House denied the report. But the wording of the denial –

that the President "has no plans to send a special envoy to Iran" – left questions. Had an envoy already been sent? Having "no plans" did not preclude the possibility. If tentative diplomatic moves were to be made, then the quiet dispatch of a presidential envoy when the Western world was otherwise engaged would be one way to do it.

The State Department, which has been zealous in implementing the policy of "dual containment", which is designed to isolate Iran and Iraq simultaneously, was more forthcoming.

It said Mr Lantos was considering a trip to Iran and had broached the subject with the White House and the State Department, but: "It's something that we would discourage."

Mr Lantos himself was said to be spending the holiday in his California district, but officials said they understood he had not yet received an Iranian visa. This suggested that he had applied for a visa and that a trip was in the offing. The question is whether unintended publicity might cause it to be called off.

The task of keeping both

Iran and Iraq equally isolated has proved increasingly difficult, as other countries have moved to improve relations. Although the official response to President Khatami's overture was cool, Mr Clinton disclosed shortly before Christmas that the administration was discussing relations with Iran.

US hesitation appears to reflect both concern not to be deceived into warming relations prematurely but also conflicting views about whether President Khatami either wants, or can soften, Iranian policy.

Children 'enslaved' by Third World debt crisis

The servicing of unpayable debts to the West is draining the Third World as surely as slavery drained the African continent for centuries, a new report by the charity Christian Aid claims. More than 1 million people are estimated to have died in passage during the Atlantic slave trade. But the modern debt crisis could cause the unnecessary deaths of 21 million children before the millennium, according to the report, "The New Abolitionists". Where slaves were once sold with a price attached to them, children are now born with a debt around their necks. In Tanzania, each new baby owes in the region of \$250 (£152) and in Mozambique \$350 a head.

Andrew Simms, one of the report's authors, said: "Servicing the debt is as sure a drain on capital resources as the slave trade was a haemorrhage of human and social capital." He and co-author Jenny Reinhard argue the time is ripe, as the millennium approaches, for a new band of abolitionists to fight for the cancellation of Third World debt just as Clarkson and Wilberforce fought for the abolition of slavery. They claim the debts would have been written off if they had been owed by private companies. The dramatic comparisons with Old World slavery signal the intention of Christian Aid, and others in the Jubilee 2000 coalition on Third World debt, to put pressure on world leaders in the run-up to the G8 heads of state meeting in Birmingham in May to write off much of the debt.

— Louise Jury

Algerian slaughter spreads

Ninety-seven Algerian civilians were killed in massacres at fake roadblocks, hamlet raids, a bomb explosion and other attacks, Algerian dailies said yesterday. The throats of 34 villagers – mostly women and children – were allegedly cut on Sunday and Monday in the Medea area. The latest violence brings the number of civilians killed in the past six days to more than 300.

— Reuters, Paris

Old friend fights for Kaunda

Tanzania's former president Julius Nyerere is close to securing the freedom of his friend, former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda. Mr Nyerere is in the Zambian capital, Lusaka, for talks with President Frederick Chiluba on Mr Kaunda's detention. Mr Kaunda, 73, who ruled Zambia from independence in 1964 until 1991, is in a maximum security jail and has been on a hunger strike since his arrest on Christmas Day.

— Reuters, Soko

Students protest in Kosovo

Riot police baton-charged Albanian students demonstrating in the capital of Serbia's Kosovo province yesterday for the right to be re-admitted to university. The students and their teachers claim they were evicted in 1991 when the Serbian authorities suspended tuition in the Albanian language.

— Reuters, Pristina

Model of farm productivity

Sunny Boy (right) has gone to that big pasture in the sky. The record-holding Dutch bull, whose sperm was sold to dairy farms worldwide, was put to sleep after suffering pain in his urinary tract. Over eight years, Sunny Boy produced up to 2 million doses of semen. There are only about half a dozen bulls in the world that have reached the 1 million mark, Holland Genetics said.

— AP, Arnhem

Moi attack on poll fuels Kenya chaos

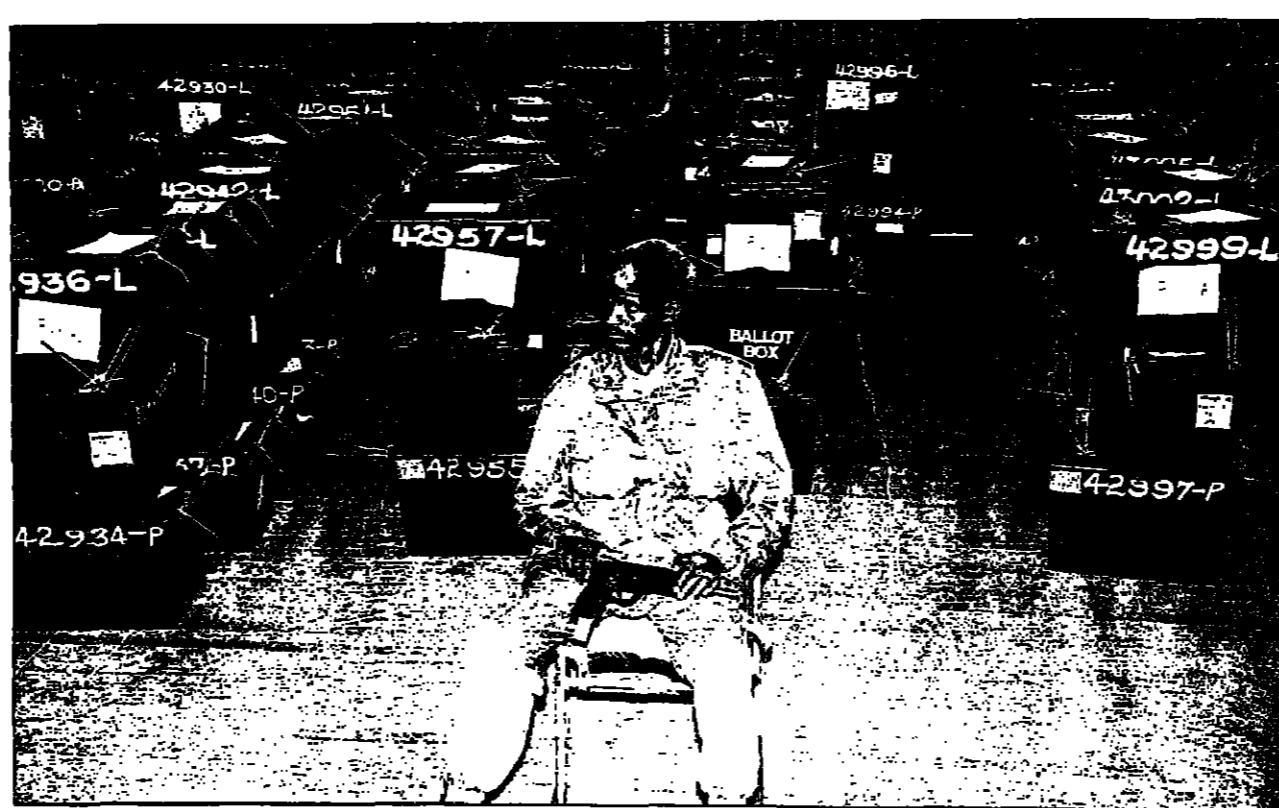
The threadbare credibility of Kenya's elections was frayed yesterday after President Daniel arap Moi's ruling party accused the electoral commission of conspiring to rig the last 19 years.

The surprise claim by the Kenyan African National Union followed similar claims on Monday by irate opposition candidates. They had accused the government-appointed electoral commission of deliberately sowing chaos to help Mr Moi's party rig the vote.

Voting in parallel presidential, parliamentary and local elections began on Monday but had to be extended by an extra day yesterday as farcical scenes of incompetence and error prevented or delayed polling in many areas.

The chaos followed a bitter and at times bloody campaign in which Kanu was widely accused of seeking to rig ballots and buy votes to extend its 34-year rule.

On Monday night, the leading opposition presidential candidate, Mwai Kibaki, said the



People's choice: A police officer guards ballot boxes in Nairobi City Hall. Voting continued yesterday. Photograph: Reuters

commission, chaired by Mr Moi's appointee, Samuel Kivuthi and comprising representatives of Kanu and the big opposition parties. The party chief executive, Geoffrey Kathurima, said Kanu and its

candidates in many areas were being targeted "by elements of the electoral commission in concert with other interested parties".

Kanu officials would no longer "legitimise the fraud

and corrupt machinations of the electoral commission" by monitoring the counting of votes which began yesterday.

But Kanu officials declined

to endorse opposition calls for the elections to be abandoned

and restaged. "There would not be any point in another election because the results have not come out," Mr Kathurima said.

"We don't expect to lose. Kanu is winning."

— Ed O'Loughlin, Nairobi

Bandit frees hostages and abandons plan to shower Milan with money

A tense 24-hour hostage crisis in a Milan bank came to a safe, almost tragicomic conclusion yesterday as the lone bandit, armed with a hand grenade and a sawn-off shotgun, released his four hostages one by one and gave up his dream of dropping hundreds of banknotes out of a helicopter to celebrate New Year's Eve.

It started out as a war of nerves between the assailant, Domenico Gargano, and law-enforcement officials sitting outside the suburban branch of the Banca Popolare di Milano. The first big breakthrough came in the ear-

ly hours of yesterday, as the manager of the bank, Irma Morello, was released in exchange for 4bn lire in cash – around £1.5m. It then became apparent that Gargano, a 35-year-old Sicilian with a long criminal record in recycling stolen goods, had no escape plan. Indeed, rather than negotiating a low-profile exit from the bank building with his loot, he asked for a helicopter from which he could drop the banknotes over the city.

The police had been considering handing over more money to safeguard the remaining

two hostages (the first had been released on Monday) but concluded they had a fairly harmless fruitcake on their hands.

By mid-morning, Pietro Ferri, 53, who was completing his last day at work before taking early retirement, was released.

In mid-afternoon Gargano

threw a wad of banknotes out of a first-floor window: two hours later he released his remaining hostage, deputy manager Vincenzo Cortellini. Handled over his weapons and negotiated his own future with a magistrate and a Carabinieri officer.

— Andrew Gumbel, Rome

جئنا من الاعمال

ONE SIZE
FITS ALL



Wish things were designed with you in mind?

The tallest man in history was 8 feet 11 inches tall. The smallest was about the height of this page. It's highly unlikely, therefore, that one size fits all. Better to treat people as individuals.

Coastguards send their last messages in Morse code

Any mariner thinking of learning Morse code to send out that vital SOS message might be better off practising their breast stroke. From midnight tonight no one will be listening. Stephen Goodwin, Heritage Correspondent, reports on the decline of a mechanical language.

Farewell messages will be tapped out in dots and dashes tonight from Land's End, Port Patrick, Cullercoats and Wick as British Telecom ceases its Morse code watchkeeping on the emergency 500kHz wavelength.

Satellite communication has superseded the code devised 160 years ago by the American painter Samuel Morse. And for all the sentimentality surrounding a system where skilled operators claimed to be able to recognise a woman's touch over the airwaves, the new technology is far superior.

Morse, as a language of distress, is following semaphore into maritime history. The Royal Navy ceased training sailors in the use of the code for wireless transmission last summer, although it still preserves the skill for sending signals by flashing lamp. Messages were sent by lamp during the Falklands War – unlike radio signals, they are not vulnerable to electronic surveillance.

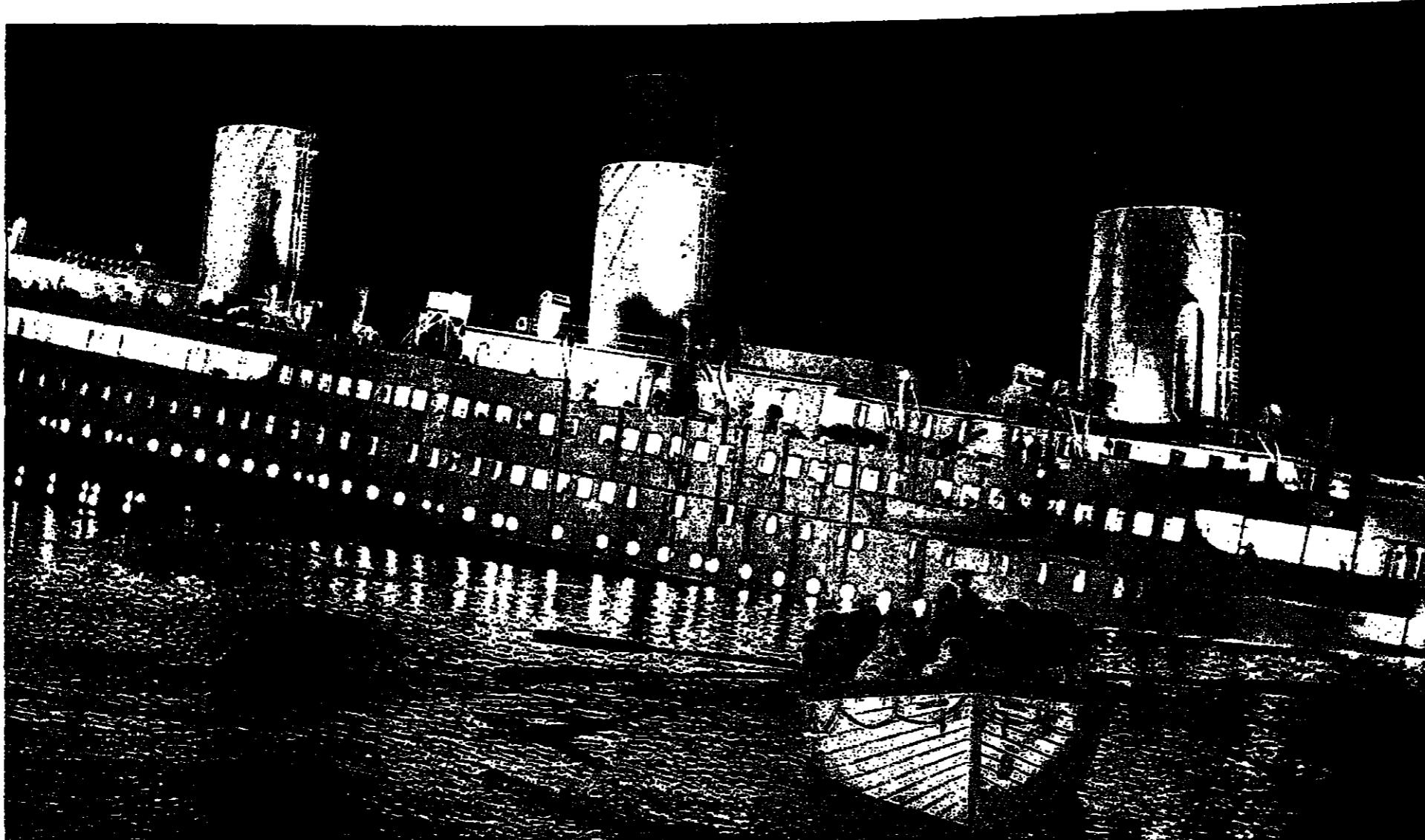
As for semaphore, sending signals by holding a flag in each hand at designated positions, RN spokesmen contacted yesterday could not recall when that ended. Signal flags are still used by the Navy to dress ships overall, run up the "England expects" command on HMS Victory and for practical warnings when a vessel is clearing mines or loading munitions.

Amateur sailors are required to learn neither Morse nor semaphore. "Do the Sea Scouts still learn semaphore?" wondered the Royal Yachting Association which trains people in the use of radio telephones and other modern technology such as the emergency beacon which a year ago saved the life of yachtsman Tony Bullimore.

Samuel Morse sent his first message by telegraph line from Baltimore to Washington in 1839. "What had God wrought," it said. It took Marconi's invention of wireless telegraphy to make the code of any use to shipping, but within only a couple of years it was saving lives. The first Morse-initiated rescue was just



End of an era: Morse code by semaphore, once a universal means of communication, is now no longer recognised by the emergency services.



Signal from the past: The film *Titanic* shows passengers taking to the lifeboats; many were saved thanks to the Morse CQD and SOS calls.

100 years ago when the *Deutschland* ran aground on the Goodwin Sands off Dover.

The code is credited with saving the lives of many who took to the lifeboats when the *Titanic* struck an iceberg in 1912. The liner first sent out the CQD – come quick, disaster – call sign in use at the time and then

switched to SOS: dot dot dot, dash dash dash, dot dot dot. The *Carpathia* picked up the message.

Morse was used to announce the ceasefires after two world wars, and was instrumental in the arrest of Dr Crippen – the American poisoner was the first criminal caught through the use of radio telegraphy.

Commercial and other uses of Morse will continue, for example through BT's long-range station at Portishead in Somerset. What is ending at midnight is the monitoring carried by BT on behalf of the Coastguard service. Messages picked up by the four coastal stations were routed to Stonehaven, in north-east

Scotland, where a team of six kept a 24-hour watch. Fortunately, in recent years they have had other radio duties since the last Morse message relayed to the Coastguard was in June 1996, from a Russian passenger vessel off Aberdeen.

Alastair Taylor, the Stonehaven station manager, admits

to a certain nostalgia for Morse. "All of us here are ex-merchant or Royal Navy who used it on board ship. Morse gets through anything, whatever the radio static," he said. But very few ships still have radio officers who are capable of sending Morse. It is too expensive for the owners to train them when

there are alternatives that are easier to use.

Under a ruling of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Morse must be replaced by the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) – using satellites – by February 1999. The United States stopped its Morse

watch in 1993 and the French followed suit last February. Under the modern systems, distress messages arrive direct to the Coastguards complete with an exact position and details of the vessel. As Roger Kohn, head of information at the IMO in London put it: "We are replacing a horse and cart with a Ferrari."

— Stephen Goodwin

Fall in cancer deaths overshadowed by rise in number of cases

Deaths from cancer fell last year, prompting one charity to claim a 'success story'. But cases of cancer are rising sharply and the improvement in the death rate is unlikely to be sustained, writes Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor.

Better treatments, detection and screening for cancer have contributed to a fall of more than 5,000 deaths a year since the early 1990s. The Cancer Research Campaign claims today.

Figures for 1996 show 153,000 people died from the disease compared with around 158,000 in the early 1990s. A fall in deaths from lung cancer in men and from breast cancer in women account for two thirds of the reduction.

Experts from the charity expressed satisfaction at the fall but warned that it might not be maintained. Dr John Toy, director of clinical programmes, said: "Although it is too soon to say we have turned the corner, these figures are very encouraging and show a new low for cancer mortality in Britain over the last 10 years. We believe a greater understanding of cancer is the reason for this success story."

However, figures published by the Office for National Statistics show that between 1979 and 1991 the number of cancer cases in England and Wales rose by 21 per cent among men and nearly 30 per cent among women. Although ageing accounted for a third of the rise in women and half of the rise in men, the rest is due to other causes.

One of the fastest-rising cancers is malignant melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, which is often caused by

excessive exposure to the sun. Prostate cancer cases have also risen rapidly and deaths from the disease are set to overtake those from bowel cancer making it Britain's second main cause of death from cancer.

On the plus side, there have been dramatic improvements in survival from childhood cancers and death rates from stomach and cervical cancer have fallen. But the Cancer Research Campaign's claim that the improvement is due to better treatment and screening is only partly true. Modern lifestyles account for most of the changes in cancer death rates – both good and bad.

The sharp fall in lung cancer deaths among men reflects the fall in smoking that began over 20 years ago. The dramatic fall in stomach cancer that began 50 years ago has accompanied the rising consumption of fresh food. Although the fall in cervical cancer deaths has accelerated in the last decade, it was already on a downward track before the national screening programme was introduced.

Where research has scored successes is in the treatment of childhood cancers, although these are rare, and in the use of tamoxifen in post-menopausal women with breast cancer, which is the most likely explanation of the fall in deaths from that disease.

A study by Cambridge University scientists published last summer suggested that on present trends the number of people affected by cancer will rise by 70 per cent in the next 20 years to 1.3 million. The disease will strike every other Briton at some point in their lives in the next generation compared with one in three people today – unless improved treatments and preventive measures can reverse the trend.

Lorry arrests spark alert over illegal immigration

Immigration officials were last night put on full alert over the New Year after three lorry loads of illegal immigrants were found to have entered the country. The Home Office has revealed that two lorries carrying up to 50 people had been stopped in Kent and Warwickshire over Christmas.

The announcement came as 16 immigrants were still being questioned after surviving sub-zero temperatures in a frozen food lorry loaded with chips. The 16 men – 15 Sri Lankans and one Bangladeshi – were hidden in gaps measuring just 18-24in between the ceiling of the lorry's refrigerated compartment and the stacks of boxes of frozen chips. They were discovered during a random search at Dover, Kent, after the lorry arrived from France last Sunday. A Home Office spokesman said the men, who had endured temperatures of -20C, would have frozen to death if they had remained in the lorry.

In the other incidents, 24 people were arrested after being seen climbing out of a lorry at Lenham Trailer Park near Maidstone, Kent, on 23 December. Another 23 people – including a six-year-old – were arrested after being spotted leaving a lorry at a service station on the M40 in Warwickshire.

Radon homes need action

A national survey of homes in areas most affected by radon found that nearly one in ten required remedial action for the gas. Investigators for the government watchdog, the National Radiological Protection Board, found they had radon concentrations above the recommended action level. Naturally occurring radon is a cancer-causing agent which comes from the breakdown of uranium in the earth's crust, causing gas to seep into every home in Britain. It is only considered dangerous in high concentrations with long-term exposure.

The highest number of tests – 335,000 – was in England where 10 per cent of the homes were above the action level, the majority in Devon and Cornwall. Wales followed with 4 per cent (of 5,000 homes tested). In Scotland it was 3.5 per cent (of 6,000 homes tested), and in Northern Ireland 3.3 per cent (of 12,300 homes tested). The survey focused on "most-affected" areas where 5 per cent or more of properties were thought to have radon levels above 200 becquerels per cubic metre of air – at which remedial work is considered prudent.

Local authorities are responsible for meeting the cost of remedial work required in council houses. Private home owners may be eligible for grant aid in some instances. Modern homes with double glazing can bring about concentrations in high radon areas. But the gas can be greatly reduced through below-floor fans or other ventilation systems. Building regulations now protect new homes from radon in high-level areas.

Crime Bill gives judges more power to fight racism

New powers in the Crime and Disorder Bill to punish racism go further than many observers realise – and further than the Labour manifesto commitments. Michael Streeter, Legal Affairs Correspondent, looks at the implications of the measures.



but ministers preferred the "racially aggravated" standard, which will be much easier for prosecutors to demonstrate.

This means that if, say, towards the end of a mugging, the attacker passes a racist remark, this will be deemed an aggravating factor whereas it may have been nearly impossible to show there was racial "motivation" for the crime.

The Home Office minister responsible for Race Relations, Mike O'Brien, says the impact of the sentencing clause means that the Government is going beyond Labour's pre-election pledge to tackle racist violence and harassment.

He said: "A clear message from the Government to racists is that if they do not understand that Britain is determined to crack down on racist crime, then they will have to learn their lesson from behind bars."

It means offences such as arson and criminal damage can attract heavier sentences if there are racial overtones.

Judges will be obliged to state in court when they consider that a crime is racially aggravated and then apply it in sentencing. The extra sentence added on for racism will be proportional to its seriousness, and will push the overall sentence towards the maximum available for the existing offence.

One potential problem is if the defence challenges an judge's decision that racism did play a part, and seeks a trial within a trial on that point.

Officials had originally suggested that the test in this area should be "racially motivated".

It seems that one likely consequence of the anti-racism measures in the Bill will be to provide greater incentive for police forces to unearth and racist elements to a crime. Although ministers praise some forces for their anti-racism policies, they believe some others are simply going through the motions.

The Commission for Racial Equality "strongly welcomed" the sentencing clause, and the fact that the court will have to state publicly that an offence was racially aggravated. However, it feels the prosecution itself should be under a duty to raise any racial element.

e code

LIFEBOAT SAVIOURS

Rescue crews around the British coast were to be called out 12,000 times last year as winds, tides and high-pressure systems forced the coast guard to launch 12,000 boats during the year at an average of three a day according to figures released by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), which said 1,442 lives were saved. 900 people were rescued, 900 people were landed, and 1,224 people were brought in before the coastguard determined the point where they had been lost. At one stage, 102 lifeboats searched the pleasure craft, 47 of which accounted for the largest number of rescues. The RNLI said, "We have to be cut off by the tide in trouble and that's why we're here for 1,453 days a year. 4,033 journeys were made and only 1,000 of those were to help people in trouble. August was the busiest month, with 10,300 rescues, and the RNLI said, "We've been saving people from the sea for 150 years and we're still saving people from the sea. We've got to be there for them and we're still there for them."

es judges more
t racism



Wish travel was more straightforward?

In 25 years, the number of British people going abroad has increased 800%. Foreign holidays now cause more stress than staying at home. For a step in the right direction, see p17.

US blacks swap white Christmas for merry Kwanzaa

The politically correct greeting 'Happy Holidays' supplanted 'Happy Christmas' in much of urban America this year. The change reflects the growing popularity among blacks of their winter celebration, Kwanzaa. Our correspondent reports on a new holiday - and a new controversy.

It was a bitter-cold evening in the barren downtime between Christmas and New Year, yet here, in the blighted depths of inner-city Washington, there was buzzing activity. Cars drew up, vans were double-parked, and a steady stream of people climbed the steps into the dilapidated school building.

Inside, about 60 people were already gathered in the draughty hall. Most were young families with broods of demonstratively washed and brushed children, bussed by attentive mothers. Some of the men wore embroidered shirts, Mandala-style, and round embroidered hats.

All eyes were fixed on the platform, where a table stood laden with fresh fruit, an assembly of dried and coloured corn-cobs, a large cup, and a stand of seven candles - three of them lit. Behind the table, bearded and bewhiskered, stood Baba C, leaning slightly on his carved staff.

No, he told his audience, the concept of the candle-stand had not been borrowed from the Jewish menorah, Kwanzaa had its own symbols. As well as the candles - one for each day of the festival - there were also the corn ears, signifying the family and abundance, the cup, for everlasting youth, and the fruit, the "first fruits of the harvest", which is what Kwanzaa means.

"Kwanzaa," Baba C said, "with mild indulgence, is not a religious holiday, it is a cultural holiday." And Baba C, he might have added, is not a priest, but a story-teller, or "griot", whose mission is to entertain and teach. Co-opting

some young children members he launched into the tale of the ant and the giant crumb (the ant could move it to his colony only by sharing it) to illustrate the principle of collective responsibility, the third of the seven principles of Kwanzaa. Others include unity, purpose, self-determination and faith.

Kwanzaa was born of the black consciousness movement of Sixties America. It was conceived in 1966 by a black American teacher, Maulana "Ron" Karenga, as a celebration of the African roots of black Americans - and offered a past that could, unlike slavery, be a source of pride.

The idea was that black Americans could gather as families and recognise a common

BY MARY DEJEVSKY

heritage in the wholesomeness and simplicity of a lost agricultural past. The holiday was designed to contrast both with the run-down urban surroundings in which so many American blacks live, and the brash commercialism of Christmas.

The symbols and rituals of

Kwanzaa are said to derive from African harvest festivals. The gifts are supposed to be simple and home-made - food, sewn or knitted goods, jewellery from shells or beads. "You don't give loads of junk, like you do at Christmas time; give gifts that stand for something, that aren't extravagant," Baba C reminded his young audience. The food is also simple - mostly southern dishes: chicken, beans, rice and greens.

But Kwanzaa is also seen as inclusive: you can celebrate Christmas, or Hanukkah, or Ramadan as well. The trend among some younger black parents who grew up in the aftermath of the civil rights movement seems to be towards rejecting Christmas and celebrating Kwanzaa instead, starting in a low-key way on 26 December and ending with a big family feast on New Year's Day.

"Kwanzaa," Baba C said, "with mild indulgence, is not a religious holiday, it is a cultural holiday." And Baba C, he might have added, is not a priest, but a story-teller, or "griot", whose mission is to entertain and teach. Co-opting



Winter harvest: Kwanzaa celebrations in the SOB Club in New York. The festival was born of the Sixties black consciousness movement, offering a past that could be a recognition of a common heritage and rejection of commercialism

Photograph: Frank Spooner Pictures

Iran's puritanical censors tear classic novels to pieces

While President Khatami's government promises intellectual freedom in Iran, James Joyce's *Ulysses* remains banned and other classics appear only in mangled form. Robert Fisk in Tehran meets a woman publisher struggling with the censors to bring literature to the people.

The greater the frustration in Shabnam Lahiji's voice, the higher the decibels in her words. "When we ask why they have not kept their promise to the people, it seems they are scared. But they do not tell us who they are scared of. So we call it the 'fear of shadows'."

Behind Mrs Lahiji is a bookshelf containing hundreds of volumes which she has published, or vainly tried to print, in the Persian language. Several of the books lie within the "shadows" so feared by the government. Twenty-eight of them are banned, including Joyce's *Ulysses*.

"All of Milan Kundera's books are banned," Mrs Lahiji says. "And I have just been asked, by the new Guidance Ministry people, to delete 54 pages from a book of Gabriel



Censored: Writers Milan Kundera (left) Laura Esquivel and Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Garcia Marquez's short stories. This happened just last week: there was a story about a grandmother who uses her granddaughter for prostitution.

"Now the government has

censored 14 different passages from Laura Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate*. I'm still trying to publish it in some form. Even with deletions, it's better than nothing."

Is it? Under Iranian law, publishers are not permitted to show where sections of books have been erased. Esquivel might be published but, Mrs Lahiji admits, in a bastardised version which gives no hint of the literary surgery which has taken place. The same applies to Marquez. Iranian students would be given no indication that his work has been mangled.

Mrs Lahiji's frustration is replaced by cynicism. "In a publishers' conference recently, we were joking that if we put *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in to the censor, he'd leave us with only ten years of solitude to publish!"

Mrs Lahiji is fighting the forces of reaction as well as fear. "We have a woman who wrote a novel in Persian. It was about two women during the [Iran-Iraq] war, one in Paris, one in Tehran - the book is in the form of letters written to each other. The woman in Tehran wants to leave and get away from the aerial bombing.

I am, I could not get permission to publish this book. They said 'absolutely impossible'."

"They," for which read the Islamic Guidance Ministry, or *Ershad* in Persian, clearly read the books sent to them for censorship. The Persian novel about the two women, for example, almost certainly fell foul of the ministry because it included a reference to a family bribing Revolutionary Guards (who are always on the watch for "loose living") not to break up a party in Tehran. Allowing a book to be published in a foreign language might prevent the "contamination" of the uneducated.

Mrs Lahiji herself was the first of Iran's 130 women publishers - there are in all 1,800 publishers - and in the past 10 years, Iran's most famous authors have been women. "All

Chinese TV breaks taboo to put sex on small screen

Chinese television is testing the limits of what its propaganda masters will allow. Teresa Poole, in Peking, says today's viewer can find much more than glowing despatches from the latest tractor collective.

ness of 300 yuan with little sister ... do little sister a favour."

Sympathy was not high on the agenda from the television programme, however. "Those playing with fire will be burned," said the concluding censorious commentary. "The Public Security Bureau will intensify its strike against this ugly behaviour."

Mainstream television news

in China is still under the firm control of the propaganda bosses, but a handful of current affairs shows now offer more ambitious fare. *Peking Express*, a 30-minute programme started by Peking Television in 1995, produces four editions a week, each of which usually airs three times a day. The audience is big - up to 2 million. A telephone hotline allows viewers to phone in with complaints that need investigating, including tales of bureaucratic intransigence.

The mix of subjects would seem bizarre to a British television audience. The prostitution report was sandwiched between a survey on the causes of stress (inadequate social welfare and increasing income gap) and warnings about small, private, watch-repair stalls which rip off customers.

The programme never asked why women from the provinces find themselves as "hostesses", the cameraman paid scant attention to the male clientele, did not reveal who owned the clubs, and did not ask why all this prostitution has been going on relatively openly under the noses of the police.

The girls and women were shown being arrested and questioned in prurient detail. The programme

never asked why women from the provinces find themselves as "hostesses", the cameraman paid scant attention to the male clientele, did not reveal who owned the clubs, and did not ask why all this prostitution has been going on relatively openly under the noses of the police.

Championing the consumer and exposing shoddy goods allows the programme greater leeway than one might expect, given that the media is still one of the tightest government-controlled sectors.

Everyone knows there is a limit beyond which it would be professional suicide to venture. "There are some subjects which we want to make programmes about, but are not al-

lowed," said Niu Zhengqing, 25, a reporter on *Peking Express*. No programme could investigate Peking's biggest corruption scandal, which saw the toppling of the city's party chief.

Du Xin, the deputy director

of the Peking Television department which makes *Peking Express*, said: "No matter what programme you are making, you'd better get the support of the relevant government department first."

So when the *Peking Express*

journalists came back with

hours of footage about city

prostitution, the programme

contacted the Peking Industrial and Commercial Bureau and the Public Security Bureau and made a return visit to the karaoke bars with the police.

The girls and women were

shown being arrested and ques-

tioned in prurient detail. The

programme never asked why

women from the provinces find

themselves as "hostesses", the

cameraman paid scant attention to the male clientele, did not reveal who owned the clubs, and did not ask why all

this prostitution has been going on relatively openly under the noses of the police.

One punter, caught quite lit-

erally with his pants down, was

led away quickly, while the

camera zoomed in on his

female companion.

If there is one rule which

television programmes know

well, it is not to risk stepping

on important toes. And these

days in China, who knows

which official one might find in a darkened room in a karaoke bar.

دكتار من الأصل



breaks taboo
small screen

wish you had more time?

Time is precious. When the Gregorian calendar was introduced in 1752, mobs rioted in the streets because they thought their lives had been shortened by 11 days. You probably know how they feel.

A New Year's fling with tartan



Left: jacket, £375, by Christian Lacroix Bazaar; red and black tartan sheer top, £85, by Jean Paul Gaultier, both from Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London, SW1 (0171-235 5000); Fifties earrings, £45, from Steinberg & Tolkein, 193 King's Road, London SW3 (0171-376 3660); dragon brooch, made to order by Vivienne Westwood Gold Label, 6 Davies Street, London W1 (0171-629 3757)

Check it out,
Sassenachs. Vivienne Westwood is not the only one south of the Border to be wild about tartan.

Tamsin Blanchard reports. Photographs by Sheridan Morley.

When the MacAndreas tartan was given recognition by the official museum in Lochcarron in 1993, it was a fine day for Vivienne Westwood. Since the early days of punk and bondage trousers, she had made use of tartans, and now she had one of her very own, to safety-pin, lace up into corsetry or ruche into bustles, just as she liked.

Westwood herself was born in Glossop, Derbyshire, but it somehow seems fitting that she should have her own tartan, however remote her Scottish roots.

Since her Anglomania collection of autumn/winter 1993, when Westwood loaded her models so heavily with tartans that Naomi Campbell fell off her platform shoes, the designer has introduced a new tartan each season. This winter, there are two: the McStone, and the McBrick – featured here, and so named because of its colour, McBrick red. The MacAndreas was named after Vivienne's husband and collaborator, Andreas Kronthaler.

Originally, the tartan plaid was a blanket worn by Scotsmen by pleating it into a belt and wrapping the excess fabric around the shoulders, a little like a sari. The British banned

the wearing of tartan as a political offence in 1746, but repealed the law in 1785.

Ironically, it was Queen Victoria who popularised it in the 19th century and made it a wardrobe staple, when she introduced a tartan for her sons to wear on holiday in Balmoral.

The look quickly caught on,

and children in particular would wear tartan kilts, dresses and knickerbockers as part of their "Sunday best". Tartan has become synonymous with royalty, as it has with Scotland, and, what's more, it never goes out of fashion. It represents both the Establishment and – when Westwood and Malcolm McLaren got their hands on the stuff in the Seventies – anarchy too.

And of course, the rest of the world, particularly the French, Italians, Japanese and Americans (who think tartan comes from the mighty clan of Ralph Lauren) perhaps love it even more than we do. Just as the Japanese will buy traditional tartans and Burberry checks by the bus load, so, too, will they spend almost £1,000 on a tailored suit made of officially recognised Westwood tartan.

The traditional kilt must be one of fashion's most enduring classics. This winter, it has been revived by the designers Clements Ribeiro, whose mini-kilts and tartan dresses decorated with lace have a certain Bohemian eccentricity about them. Christian Lacroix, French designer and fan of all things British, is inspired by traditional fabrics: he takes

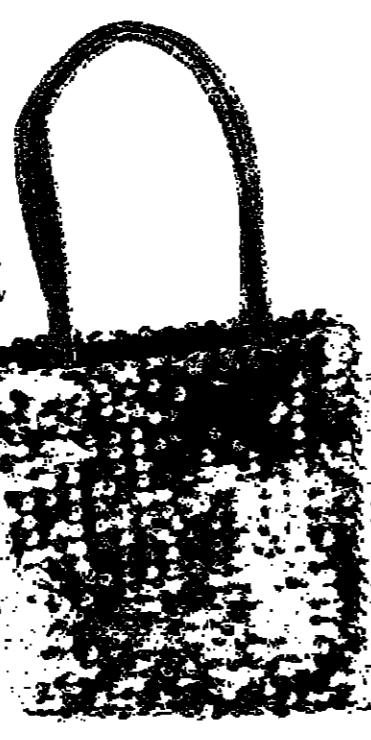


Button-back, McBrick tartan butterfly jacket, £650; matching beetle skirt, £235; both by Vivienne Westwood Red label, 44 Conduit Street, London W1 (enquiries, 0171-439 1109); green leather gloves, made to order, by Vivienne Westwood Gold label, as before; brooch, £300, from Steinberg & Tolkein, as before

Stylist: Charlie Harrington
Model: Clare Durkin at Models I
Make-up: Alex Babsky at Mandy Coakley
Hair: Esther Bihore for MacMillan, 61-63, Monmouth Street, London WC2

(All prices are pre-sale)

BUY ME SEQUINED BAG BY MORGAN £19.99



If you have recently visited the section in Selfridges devoted to Prada's younger sister line, the party girl Miu Miu, you'll be aware of the mini-whirlwind frenzy over the most sought-after accessory of the season: the little sequined handbag. It is the sort of thing you used to hanker after as a child because it is so bright and sparkly. The only drawback, as usual, is the price – more than £100 – and the fact that every fashion victim in town has bought up almost the entire stock of the glittery little blighters already.

By far the best alternative is the £19.99 version from Morgan. Available in bright pink, silver, gold and black, it's the perfect size for a bit of lip-gloss, a small purse and, of

course, the essential toothbrush: a great companion for a fabulous New Year's Eve party. And you'll have some money left over for a few drinks and a taxi home.

Available from Morgan, 393 Oxford Street, London W1 and branches nationwide (enquiries, 0171-499 4101). Sale starts today, with reductions of up to one-third.

Holly Davies

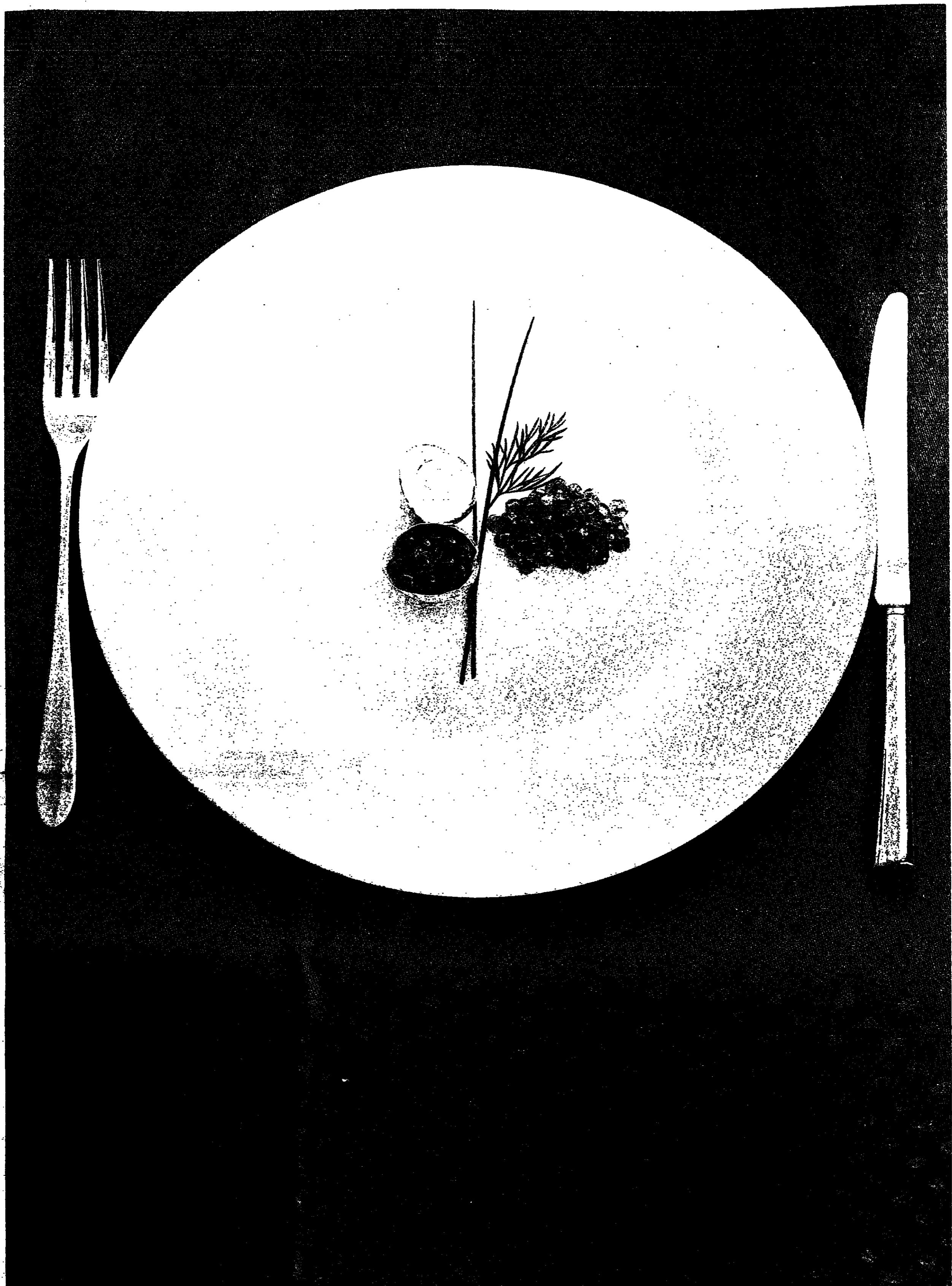


Chiffon tartan top with neck scarf, £198 and matching wool trousers, £211, both by Clements Ribeiro, from Liberty, Regent Street, London W1 (0171-409 7719); cashmere tartan rose cardigan, £285, from the Scotch House, 2 Brompton Road, London, SW1 (mail order, 0171-581 2151); suede ankle boots, £375, from Gina, 189 Sloane Street, London SW1 (0171-223 2932)



Silk vest, to order; matching briefs in box of three, £89, both by Burberry, 18-22 Haymarket, London SW1 (enquiries, 0171-734 5929); black lace suspender belt, £129, by Christian Dior, from a selection at Harrods, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (enquiries, 0171-225 5661); choker, from Steinberg & Tolkein, as before

دكتار من الأدلة



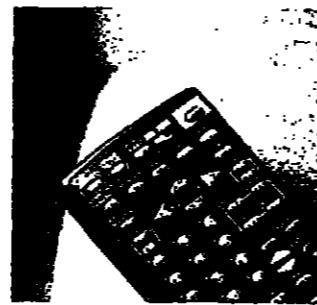
Wish you could have a bit more?

Due to the many ingenious forms of taxation, the average person only ever sees around 64% of the money they actually earn.
If only your hard earned money could work a bit harder.



Wish life was fairer?

Scientific tests prove that bread and jam really does fall jam side down more often than not. Life is therefore
cosmically unfair and you should be more careful where you put your bread.



Queues. OK. We admit it. Banks have queues. To keep ours as short as possible we've put Express Tills in our branches for handling cash and cheques. We've taken on 2000 extra staff to help out in busy branches at busy times. And no one in our branches will take their lunch when you want to take yours.



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Travel. Travel plans can go awry, your travel money won't. Order your currency over the phone and you can then pick it up from Heathrow, Gatwick, Glasgow or Birmingham airports. Or, of course, from your branch. We'll buy back any unused notes and traveller's cheques when you return, and in case things do go awry, we have Travel Insurance too.



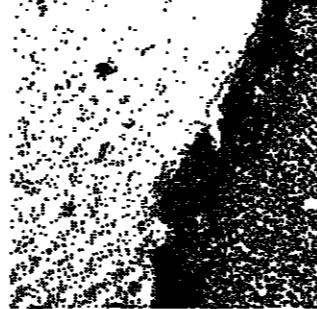
Mortgages. If a jumper is tight you can take it off. But a mortgage is a long term commitment and needs to be as comfortable as possible. That's why we offer a wide range of mortgage options and have experienced mortgage advisors to find the right thing for you. You can also get a swift decision in principle over the phone.



Time Saving. Spend less time banking and you have more time for everything else. That's why you can speed up things like bill payments by using our branch cash machines or 24 hour automated telephone banking service. And it usually only takes 15 minutes to arrange an Abbeyloan over the phone.



More. There's a bit of Oliver Twist in all of us. If you want more, find out if your savings can earn better interest by calling the Savings Information Line. (Call 0800 222 397 Mon-Fri 8am-9pm, Sat 8am-4pm quoting reference A700.)



Fair banking. We don't charge fees on agreed overdrafts or for bank account letters. Nor do we charge for stopping cheques or duplicate statements. When you're in credit we offer tiered rates of interest and a unique double interest bonus if you pay in £500 or more a month for a year. You can also take out up to £500 a day from our branch cash machines. It's your money, after all.

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POLITICS

Teachers join ranks of the great and the good in the 'people's honours'

Teachers are rewarded today with knighthoods - 'sirs for sir' - in the first "people's New Year's Honours List" since Tony Blair came to power.

Peter Clark, the headmaster who was sent in to the Ridings school in Halifax, West Yorkshire, after inspectors said it was failing, is rewarded for his efforts by becoming a Commander of the British Empire.

He is one of 58 teachers or others connected with education honoured as part of the Prime Minister's election commitment to raise standards in education.

Next year's Honours List will reward doctors and nurses to coincide with the 50th

anniversary of the National Health Service.

Knighthoods are awarded to three state school head teachers for their work in rescuing failing schools or raising standards: Leslie Hampton, head of Northcote School, Wolverhampton, becomes a knight; Patricia Colarbone, past head of Haggerston secondary school for girls in Hackney, and Tansy Imison, head of Hampstead School, Camden, become dames.

Sir Ron Dearing, chairman of the national committee of inquiry into higher education, is one of four new life peers. The others are Sir Robin Butler, cabinet secretary; Paul Halmay, the pub-

lisher and Labour backer, and the Rt Rev David Sheppard, past bishop of Liverpool.

The prime minister's official spokesman joked about the list being dubbed the people's honours - "they are all people; there are no Martians in the list". But Mr Blair has been keen to ensure the continued support for the honours list system by rewarding more people for achievement in ordinary walks of life.

In addition to the knight hood for Elton John, the awards carry a special section for those involved in planning the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, including warrant officer Paul

Oxford, For Public Service and serv International Law. Pattison, Professor John Ridley, Dean, University College London Medical School and Chair, Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee. For serv Medicine.

Pettit, Dennis, Leader, Nottinghamshire County Council. For serv Local Government and to the community in Nottinghamshire.

Simms, Neville Ian, Group ch exec and Deputy chm, Tarmac plc. For serv the Construction Industry.

Dame Commander (DBE) Collarbone, Mrs. Patricia, Director, London Leadership Centre. For serv Education. Imison, Mrs. Tansy, Head Teacher, Haggerston School, London. For serv Education. Upchurch, Miss Mary Elizabeth, OBE, President, United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting. For serv Health Care.

Smith, Norman Brian, CBE, Non-exec chm, Cable and Wireless plc and BAA plc. For serv Industry and to the community.

Stephens, Edwin Burrie, Chairman, Siebe plc. For serv the Engineering Industry.

Stevenson, Henry Dennistoun, CBE, Chairman, GPA plc and Pearson plc. For serv Business and to the Arts.

Wilson, Professor Colin Alexander St John. For serv Architecture.

Commander (CBE)

Allen, Professor Robert Colman Brown, Ladies chm of Edinburgh City Trust. For serv Health Care.

Willis, William James Lawton, President, The Royal Society of Arts. For serv the Royal Mail, Alexander Wright, President, Royal Mail, Peter Willis, President, Royal Mail, President of the Royal Society of Arts.

Wright, Michael Edward, CBE, DL, Lately dir general, Marie Curie Cancer Care. For serv Cancer Care.

Smith, Norman Brian, CBE, Non-exec chm, Cable and Wireless plc and BAA plc. For serv Industry and to the community.

Stephens, Edwin Burrie, Chairman, Siebe plc. For serv the Engineering Industry.

Stevenson, Henry Dennistoun, CBE, Chairman, GPA plc and Pearson plc. For serv Business and to the Arts.

Wilson, Professor Colin Alexander St John. For serv Architecture.

Knights Commander (KCB)

Bush, Geoffrey Hubert, Director general, Resources and Planning, Her Majesty's Board of Inland Revenue. Carden, Richard John Derek, Head, Food Safety and Environment Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Christopherson, Miss Romola Carol Andrea, Director of Press and Publicity, Department of Health.

Evans, Mrs. Carole Ann, Head Teacher, Primary School, St. George's, Bristol. For serv Education.

Firth, James, Retired, Royal Holloway, University of London, For serv the Royal Holloway, University of London, For serv Education.

Fraser, Ian, Retired, Royal Holloway, University of London, For serv the Royal Holloway, University of London, For serv Education.

Gill, Michael, Director, Senior Civil Service Group, Cabinet Office. Hamill, James, Head, Home Department, Scottish Office.

Hansen, Julian David, Lately Bnd 7, Ministry of Defence. Harbison, Samuel Alexander, H.M. ch inspector of Nuclear Installations and dir of Nuclear Safety, Health and Safety Executive. Hedges, John Clive, Director of Operations, Department of Education and Employment. Hunt, Professor Julian Charles Roland, FRS, Lately ch exco, Meteorological Office, Maines, James Dennis, Lately dir general, Information Systems, Ministry of Defence. Martin, Ronald Noel, For pub service. Whippman, Michael Lewis, Policy dir, Department of Social Security, Wimifirth, Charles Boniface, Clerk of Committees, House of Commons.

North, Peter Machin, CBE, QC, Principal, Jesus College, Cambridge. For serv Education.

North, Peter Machin, CBE, Chairman, Enterprise Oil. For serv the Oil Industry.

John, Elton Hercules, CBE, Musician and Composer. For serv Music and for charitable serv.

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Hearne, Graham James

How I learnt to move on by going backwards

RESOLUTIONS

Rachel Cusk felt trapped by the interminable misery of boarding school, even after she left. But then she learned how to play a trick on time ...

I wonder whether it is true, as I sometimes feel, that the early part of life assumes more significance the further away from it you are; that rather as the roots of a tree extend to support its growing weight, the vessel of childhood and adolescence is not, as we might think, discarded, but enlarged to contain the volume of years.

It is not that I resent the way time orders experiences, or that the period when someone is most powerless should retrospectively hold the most interest.

My sense of an injustice, or at least a deception, lies rather in the youthful belief that the future is super-abundant and universal, and will absolve us of the parochialness of childhood. To find that life is ultimately parochial, that it comes back again and again to the place where it began, fills me with unease. I have no sense of a story yet, no faith in an ending that will justify its beginning. Increasingly I believe that you can spend only what you have, and that if you spend unwisely at first it is simply because no one has taught you about prudence and pain.

I misspent my youth, although not in the traditional way. When I was 12 I was sent to boarding school, for an interment so lengthy in proportion to my age that the prospect of release lay philosophically beyond my reach. I had always disliked school, mainly because it encouraged counting. From an early age I became aware that imposing enforceable limits on time interfered with one's natural relationship to it. Since birth I had suffered from asthma, itself an illness of time, an aversion to the military march of breath and hours. Boarding school presented a challenge even to my understanding of the arithmetic of routine. Instead of days there were terms, periods of submersion too long humbly to be withstood. Some other method of survival would have to be evolved, some air pocket found where the weeks could safely be waited out.

This evolution might, of course, have occurred naturally. Initially unhappy, I might have changed and become someone who liked boarding school; but it seemed to me even then that those sorts of changes were dangerous, that they represented some form of surrender. Instead I stuck by my unhappiness. It was a private resource, indeed my only privacy. It became the place where time could pass by without its shadow falling on me,

where life could be felt despite every attempt to make it unfeeling.

For a long time afterwards I thought that the way to remember those six years was to honour their detail, their nights and days, their violence, their loneliness, the faces and words and feelings that populated them. I thought the time they represented, like a paper bond, could be reclaimed; that by living every new hour with the awareness of liberty, the site of pain would yield some strange pleasure, like a tender scar over which longing fingers can finally run. But the futility of this pleasure, like the fact that there was a scar at all, became enraging. The detail, rather than justifying the expense of years, evinced their waste. Life, I realised, had gone on, had been spent. The fact that I hadn't wanted it did not mean it could be refunded. I had been waiting for a better time, but when it came I found that I did not step from a cocoon of repressed desire to receive it. What had shielded me could not be cast away. The impermeability of my skin repelled good and bad alike. I waited out happiness, and anticipated its end, just as I had done misery.

These equations seem, and are, simple, but the purpose of reciting them here is to question the greater science to which they belong. We all feel ourselves to be the servants, if not the victims, of chronology and time, and don't know when or where along this merciless trajectory we will find the core of our being, the spool of significance around which the thread of years will wrap itself. My sense that this significance had come too early for me, had snagged me and disordered the whole weave of my future, left me in a kind of moral opposition to the notions of order that seemed to underpin experience. I still wonder whether the only function of personality is to bear witness to the brutality of its formation, to tell the story of how you came to be by enacting the process of your creation; and how by implication one part of time could be so much more important than another. I wonder why the development of self-will is accompanied by an inability to change, and whether the injustice of unhappiness is real or illusory. I rail at the idea that having endured the bad, I could find myself unfit for the good. Most of all I wonder whether people are no more than the sum of the things that have happened to them, like a "before and after" advertisement, except in reverse.

When I left school, the intimate relationship with time I had formed permitted it a troubling, guilty tenancy in my mind, although in fact I had earned my freedom from it. I took to smoking, the original pause for thought, as a form of privacy, a way



of obscuring time's presence. The limited languor, the empty parentheses of a cigarette still hold a great attraction for me. Writing fiction later became a similar way of living outside time, a feint of inversion: the creation over time of a place in which time has no power. Given that this was precisely the reverse of what had happened during my years at school, I could have been eternally satisfied by the neatness of my own existence, and the good order I could these days show myself to be in. In fact I derived something better from it, something which, if not actually an answer, at least holds some hope of becoming one.

The question, in any case, was this: why does the order in which things

happen act as an index on their importance? I mean this in the sense of the capacity to feel. It seemed to me an unanswerable injustice, a victory of matter over mind, that the store of human spirit should diminish; that having cared about one thing, I could now only care about another in a way that surrendered its definition to the first. It's the thing people always say about first loves, and I never believed that either.

What struck me, finally, was that the decision to see time as going only one way is a personal decision, made through weariness, or fear, or perhaps even contentment. It struck me that by seeing life as going backwards I had a far greater chance of making some

sense of myself. This is what fiction tries to do, to tell a story in the knowledge of its ending, and thus accord to all the parts of life their proper value.

I still occasionally visit myself in the dungeon of a dark, friendless school night, and I breathe and I wait, and I can feel in that waiting some unknown purpose, some secret sense of a better place; and I am not ruined, or elsewhere, but the same, furnishing that anticipation to the beat of an inaudible pulse.

Tomorrow: 1992 – the year David Aaronovitch realised he was climbing the wrong greasy pole



BELOVED AND BONK Diary of a divorce

It started when the much-awaited decree absolute arrived a little early. I had planned to be in my best frock, with washed hair and half a day of starvation under a tightened belt. Instead it found me with biscuit-stuffing PMT, in dirty jeans, sitting at my desk wondering whether I'd picked up nits from the kids again. So when that rare to tell the glad tidings to my new Very Nice Chap, I had oatmeal stuck to my teeth, an attack of the does-my-bum-look-big's and a Serengeti of wildlife on my head. A celebratory snog seemed out of the question.

I was still suffering from having received great news whilst looking terminally ugly when we dropped VNC off at the station. I was so busy thinking about how hideously revolting I was, and how all the presents I'd bought were disastrous, that I managed to say goodbye to him as though he were a Tesco's receipt. And all the way home in the car I knew that by the time he reached York he would be completely over me, and in love with someone beautiful in the next seat. And that it would be my fault. Again.

Then the children revolted about the messiness of our Christmas arrangements. Two days here, two days there, a week with Beloved. Arrangements that a month ago they found unbearably wonderful and exciting were now so obnoxious to them that they swore they didn't want to be with their cousins, they didn't want to see Granny and they didn't want to see their dad. All they wanted was to cling to my legs all Christmas and New Year and be fed chocolate and presents until they fell asleep. And they demonstrated their love for me by fighting, throwing things and having to be sent upstairs.

Then in the afternoon we got lost on the way back from dropping the dog off at the kennels (very traumatic: "Are you leaving me in this awful place? Are you ever coming back?") We entered some Alain Fournier domain where the lanes changed shape and direction and there weren't any road signs. And as I frantically did three-point turns in muddy cartways, spraying liquid clay all over the windscreen with my madly spinning wheels, the radio played a selection of tunes for the Recently Divorced and the Soon-To-Be-Dumped-For-Being-Ugly. At least my snarling and whimpering by turns made the kids shut up.

And when I got home to cram presents, mountains of laundered clothes and children into the car to escape to my sister's for Christmas Day, I found that the sofa-delivery people had been. And my new sofa is much bigger than I expected, so asking them to put it on the landing upstairs wasn't a great idea. You need mountaineering equipment now to get between bathroom and bedrooms, and nothing, this side of the San Andreas Fault going live, will shift it.

Climbing over that sofa for the fifth time, ferrying fish tanks, wall-sized posters of waterlilies and egg incubators (presents, OK – I know my family aren't normal) down to the car, I felt very negative indeed. What happy ending could possibly be in store for a person like me, I thought. How does any handsome prince get a sofa bed, two quarrelling children and a bum the size of Mount Rushmore on to the back of his white charger, or even into the boot of his red Triumph? It's just not possible. He's probably snogging the leggy blonde backpacker from Adelaide already.

So that was Christmas Eve.

Can't say I remember a great deal of Christmas Day. I know Donner and Blitzen came bursting through the front doors of the wood-burning stove as planned, because seeing Buster and Bunty up to their arms in woolly climbing socks was the last image on my retina before I started putting chablis on my cornflakes. I drank on Christmas Day, shamelessly and with great purpose, to drown out the year and all my sins and feelings with it: my failure to keep husbands, believe in Happy Endings, and get sofas in the right place.

And that, dear readers, was the consequence of having Christmas on day twenty-bloody-eight. And if you don't understand, boys, get a girl, without PMT, to explain. All right?

Stevie Morgan

LONDON CINEMAS

(today's showings only – please confirm times with venues)

ABC BAKER STREET (0171-935 9772) **ABC** Baker St Home Alone 3 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm The Tango Lesson 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm

ABC PANTON STREET (0171-930 0631) **ABC** Picc Cine The Game 2.20pm, 5.20pm L.A. Confidential 3pm, 5pm Mrs Brown 1.20pm, 3.40pm Wilde 1.10pm, 3.30pm

ABC PICCADILLY (0171-437 3561) **ABC** Picc Chasing Amy 1.15pm, 3.25pm, 5.55pm G.I. Jane 1.40pm, 5.40pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE (0171-836 6279) **ABC** Picc Alien: Resurrection 8.40pm The Borrowers 1pm, 4.50pm George Of The Jungle 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.20pm Spiceworld - The Movie 2.45pm, 4.30pm, 8.50pm Tomorrow Never Dies 3pm, 4.30pm, 8.25pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE (0171-439 4470) **ABC** Leic Sq L'Appartement 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm Lawn Dogs 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm Marius Et Jeannette 1pm, 3.15pm, 6pm Ma Vie En Rose 1.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD (0171-636 6148) **ABC** Tot C.Rd Spiceworld - The Movie 1.15pm, 3.25pm, 5.35pm, 7.45pm Tomorrow Never Dies 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm Welcome To Sarajevo 1.35pm, 4.05pm, 7pm

BARBICAN CINEMA (0171-382 7000) **Barb** Moorgate The Borrowers 2.30pm Spiceworld - The Movie 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm Tomorrow Never Dies 3pm, 6pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA (0171-351 3742) **Chelsea** The Tango Lesson 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm

ICA CINEMA (0171-930 3647) **Char Cross** Close-Up 5pm, 7pm, 9pm Vitelloni 6.30pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE

1pm 3pm, 5pm The Full Monty 1.30pm, 3.30pm

Tomorrow Never Dies 1.45pm, 4.15pm

Notting Hill 1pm, 3pm, 6.30pm

Curzon Phoenix (0171-369 1720) **Curzon** Picc Keep The Aspidistra Flying 6.15pm, 6.30pm

Notting Hill Coronet (0171-727 6705) **Notting Hill** Gale Tomorrow Never Dies 3pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

Curzon West End (0171-439 4805) **Curzon** Picc Total Recall 1.30pm, 3.45pm

Elephant 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6pm

Curzon Phoenix (0171-369 1721) **Curzon** Picc Keep The Aspidistra Flying 3.45pm

Curzon West End (0171-439 4805) **Curzon** Picc Total Recall 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6pm

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Buxton Orr

Buxton Daebitz Orr, composer: born Glasgow 18 April 1924; married 1955 Isabelle Roberts (marriage dissolved), 1968 Jean Lacimer; died Hereford 27 December 1997.

Buxton Orr's substantial catalogue of expertly crafted compositions ought to be part of the standard concert repertoire; instead, they are known to a small cohort of admirers and to an entire generation of pupils who have made sure that his music remains a living proposition.

Orr was born in Glasgow in 1924, into an artistic family: his mother, Marie Daebitz, was for years a mainstay of the Glasgow Citizens' theatre company, and his maternal grandfather, Richard Daebitz, an immigrant from Germany, led the second violins of the Scottish Orchestra under conductors of the stature of Nikisch, Richter, Richard Strauss. Buxton, whose voice never lost its Scottish burr, would hear stories of these great men at his grandfather's knee.

He was initially intended to follow a career in medicine but, like Robert Simpson just a few years earlier, abandoned it for music. Between 1952 and 1955, now established in London, Orr studied composition with Benjamin Frankel, with whom he was later to work on a number of film and television scores; he also took conducting lessons with Aylmer Buess.

It was following in Frankel's film-music footsteps that Orr first came to public notice, even if marginally, first with the scores to a number of Boris Karloff and other horror films

and then, with the score to the film of Tennessee Williams' *Suddenly Last Summer* (1959), starring Elizabeth Taylor and Katharine Hepburn and directed by Sam Spiegel.

The first of his serious works to attract genuine, widespread attention was his one-act opera *The Wager*, completed in 1961 and premiered by the New Opera Company at Sadler's Wells that year.

Orr's composing career progressed alongside growing prominence as a teacher. He took up an appointment at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 1965, where he was to remain for the next quarter-century, giving up teaching to devote himself to full-time composition only in 1990.

His commitment to teaching was whole-hearted: he founded, for example, the Guildhall New Music Ensemble in 1975 to allow his students to play "difficult" contemporary scores by composers such as Birtwistle and Stravinsky. Indeed, teaching was never a dry, academic exercise for Orr: harmony and counterpoint weren't taught by standing up and talking about them; instead, his pupils got to know their theory from the music itself, from the understanding that comes with performing.

The breadth of his interests is confirmed in his ten-year conductorship from 1970 to 1980, of the London Jazz Composers' Orchestra (founded by Barry Guy, an Orr pupil), with which he toured England and the Continent, taking the group to the Berlin Jazz Festival in 1972.

But despite his music-making and the hundreds of students who passed through his hands at the Guildhall, it

is for his own music that Buxton Orr will be remembered – if it is given a chance to be heard. His earliest works are quite close to the soundworld of Britten, but it was another Benjamin who was soon to prove more influential: his teacher, Ben Frankel, from whom Orr adopted a kind of tonally directed use of the 12-note row, contrapuntally organised to produce music with a real sense of purpose.

His first love was the human voice and, by extension, the stage: apart from *The Wager* (recently revised for chamber orchestra in the hope of stimulating further performances), there are several music-theatre pieces: *The Unicorn* (1981), *The Last Circus* (1984) and *Ring In The New* (1986), for the last of which, with Michael Bawtree, Orr won the 1988 Seagrams Prize of the American National Music Theatre Network, during his stay as composer-in-residence at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts in Alberta, Canada.

There are six song-cycles for voice and piano or instrumental ensemble, as well as: *The Knight and the Lady* (1978) for solo voice, and *The Echoing Green* (1961), after William Blake, for children's voices and piano or orchestra.

His orchestral works likewise show his concern for his audience. In compositions intended for serious listeners, such as the 40-minute *Sinfonia Ricercante* of 1987, Orr deployed his considerable technique to produce music that would satisfy the most demanding intellect.

Yet in others, like the *Triptych* (1977), the *Farfare and Processional* for strings (1968) or the *Carmen Fantasy* for cel-

lo and orchestra (1987), his sense of humour guaranteed works of immediate appeal. (In fact, *A Carmen Fantasy* began life as the first of a series of four operatic fantasies for cello and piano; the others are *Portrait of the Don* (on *Don Giovanni*, 1987), *Catfish Row* (on *Porgy and Bess*, 1997) and *Tales from Windsor Forest* (on *Falstaff*, 1997).)

A consistent feature of Orr's surprisingly large output

is his music for brass or wind band, some ten in total and composed across his career.

There are two concertos, for trombone (1971) and for trumpet (1976), both with brass band, and a number of other pieces, not least *A John Gay Suite* for symphonic wind band (1972), *Tournament* for ten solo brass (1985) and the recent *Narration* for symphonic winds (1993), drawn from music for *The Alchemist*, an opera on which Orr was still working at the time of his death. (He left part of the first act orchestrated and the rest completed in piano score. After

Benjamin Frankel's death in 1973 Orr orchestrated the piano score of Frankel's opera *Marching Song: The Alchemist* now requires another composer to perform Orr the same service.)

There is also a substantial corpus of chamber music, including two string quartets, three piano trios (the only "serious" Orr to have been recorded on CD), a recent string trio, and most of the series of six *Réfrains*, composed between 1970 and 1992 for a variety of instrumental forces; these are basically extended rondo structures in which, as the composer put it, "a recurrent idea is used to bind together a total structure".

– Martin Anderson



Music of immediate appeal: Orr conducting, in a drawing by Milein Cosman, 1988



Woodcock: two fists and a fortune

Bruce Woodcock

Bruce Woodcock, boxer: born Doncaster 18 January 1921; British and Empire heavyweight champion 1945-50; European heavyweight champion 1946-49; married 1947 Nora Speight (one son, one daughter); died Doncaster 21 December 1997.

Bruce Woodcock was one of Britain's sporting heroes in those heady, deprived, optimistic days immediately after the Second World War. He had a snappy left jab, a big, honest heart and plenty of charisma, and was the dominant European heavyweight of his generation.

When the world heavyweight champion Joe Louis retired, the great British sporting entrepreneur of the day Jack Solomons matched Woodcock with another American, Lee Savold, for the vacant championship at White City in June 1950. It was not recognised as a title fight far beyond Britain, but none of that worried the crowd of more than 50,000.

As an 18-year-old railway-

man Woodcock boxed for England in the 1939 European Championships in Dublin, and won the ABA light-heavyweight title. By 1942, he was a professional.

For two years, up to the summer night in July 1945 when he became British and Empire heavyweight champion by knocking out Jack London, Woodcock trained in a tiny, home-made gym in an old stable at the back of The Plough pub in Doncaster.

There was no running water, and the tiny ring was jammed flush against the walls, which made sparring hazardous. Yet from these antiquated conditions Woodcock launched himself into world class. The gym, which legend has it was a hiding place for Dick Turpin in the 1700s, is still in use.

Woodcock beat London, whose son Brian would fight Muhammad Ali 20 years later, in the first of the splendid outdoor promotions staged by Solomons. This one was at White Hart Lane. Woodcock won in six rounds. Ever the homespun hero, he declined all

invitations to celebration parties and drove straight back to Doncaster.

He was hurried too quickly into world class and lost to Tami Mauriello in the fabled Madison Square Garden, New York, when he hurt a knee, and yet a fortnight later outpointed Freddie Mills over 12 hard rounds at the Harringay Arena.

Two months later, Woodcock knocked out Albert Renet of France in six rounds to become European champion, and then in September 1946, he stopped Leanevich in the eighth of a non-title fight before a sell-out crowd at Harringay.

The year's earnings were

enough to buy Bruce and his wife Nora their first house, plus another one for his parents away from the poor "Low Drop" area of Doncaster where they had lived for so long.

In his autobiography, *Two Fists and a Fortune*, published shortly after his career had finished in 1951, Woodcock remembered:

Bright lights, gay nights, champagne parties and pretty women are not for me. I know better than anyone how

won again when Lee Savold was disqualified for hitting him low.

After a successful Empire title defence in Johannesburg against Johnny Ralph, Woodcock and Freddie Mills drew 46,000 to White City for a rematch. Thousands crammed Great Windmill Street off Piccadilly simply to see the fighters arrive for the weigh-in. Woodcock won in 14 rounds.

The cut eye ruined his chances against Savold, but while the promoter Solomons attempted to talk up a rematch, Woodcock defended his British and Empire titles against the younger, untested Jack Gardner, and retired after the 11th round. Gardner's punches had closed his one good eye.

In retirement, he remained in the Doncaster area, and for many years kept a pub. He rarely talked publicly about boxing, but acknowledged that it had enabled him to put his son through college and provide his daughter with a decent education. That probably meant more to him than any of his victories.

– Bob Mee

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

FLUCK Alan. Artist-Director, Youth & Community Arts School, Sutton-Fairbank Girls' School, Sutton. Funeral 5 Jan. at the Guildford Crematorium. No flowers please. Donations in Alan's name to Musicians' Benevolent Fund, Memorial Service in London to be arranged. Enquiries to Funeral Services, telephone 0171 8673242.

PICKETHORPE Dorothy, Katherine, CBE, peacefully at home on 27 December 1997, aged 81. Funeral service at St Mary's Church, Tarratt, Rushford, Blundell Forum, Dorset on Tuesday 6 January at 2pm. Family flowers only. Donations to St Mary's Church, Tarratt, Dorset, or St. George's Church, F. D. 16 Salisbury Street, Blandford.

SHEPHERD Alan (widower of Pedi) died in hospital, London, Christmas Eve, 2003. His beloved husband of 44 years, kind father of Tracie and Matthew, terrific step-father to Becky and Laura, best "Grandad with whiskers" to Anton, brilliant neighbour, friend and a true "gentleman".

For BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2811. Charges are £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11pm, 1st Battalion, Royal Yeomanry of Ulster, mounted on the Queen's Guard, 11pm, 1st Battalion, Royal Yeomanry of Ulster, mounted on the Queen's Guard. Both paraded by the Household Cavalry, Buckingham Palace, 11pm, band paraded by the Household Cavalry Guards.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J. C. Bannerman and Miss A. J. P. Kerr

The engagement is announced between Mr and Mrs Michael Bannerman and Miss Anne Campbell Bannerman, daughter of Mr and Mrs Horn, Campbell Bannerman, of Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

BIRTHS

Mr Douglas Anthony Chil, former Deputy Prime Minister in Australia.

Mr Edward Glynvynn Benn, life

President, Ben Brown, 92. Mr Phil

Blakely, rugby player, 47. Sir

George Blunden, former deputy

Governor, Bank of England, 75. Mr

Michael Bonhag, secretary, Royal

and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, 63. Sir George Christie, chairman, Glyndebourne Production Ltd, 62. Mr Stephen Cheshire, organist, Cambridge University, 39. Air Marshal Sir Patrick Dunn, 75. Sir Anthony Hopkins, actor, 66. Mr Ben Kingsley, actor, 54. Mr Brian McGrath, rugby player, 38. Mr Eric Mackay, former editor of the *Scotsman*, 75. Miss Sarah Miles, actress, 54. Dr Valerie Pearl, former president, New Hall, Cambridge, 71. M. Jean-Pierre Rives, rugby captain, 45. Mr Nigel Rudd, chairman, Williams Holdings, 51. Sir John Sainsbury, former Clerk of the Parliaments, 63. Mr Alexander Salmond MP, 43. The Rt Rev Timothy Stevens, Bishop of Dunwich, 51. Miss Donna Summer, singer, 49. Mr Hugh Tunnell, former ambassador to Bahrain, 62. Sir David Walker, chairman, Morgan Stanley Group, 58.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS Jacques Cartier, explorer and navigator, 1491; Andreas Vesalius, anatomist, 1543; Seamus Jenkyns, author and politician, 1794; Sir Edward Augustus Bond, 1st Baron of the Admiralty, 1816; King Farouk I, King of Egypt, 1830; Henri-Emile Benoit Matisse, painter, 1869; Julie Stein (Julius Stein), songwriter and composer, 1905.

DEATHS John Wade, Protestant reformer, 1584; Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II, 1705; John Flamsteed, first Astronomer Royal, 1665; Gustave Courbet, painter, 1877; Sir Malvolio Campbell, speedster on land and water, 1848; Sir George Fenton, artist, 1972; The Rev Canon Lewis John Collins, peace campaigner, 1982; Rick Nelson, pop singer, killed, 1985; Sam Spiegel, film producer, 1985. On this day: the Honourable East India Company was chartered by Queen Elizabeth I, 1600; the first Huguenots left France, bound for South Africa, 1687; a window tax was imposed in England, 1695; Thomas Alva Edison demonstrated his incandescent lamp, 1879; the chimes of Big Ben were broadcast for the first time, 1923; the British Army abandoned the use of the lance, except for ceremonial use, 1927; the farthing ceased to be legal currency, 1960; the Central African Federation (Rhodesia and Nyasaland) was dissolved, 1963. Today is Hogmanay in Scotland and the Feast Day of St Columba of Iona, St John-Francis Regis, St Melania the Younger and St Silvester I, pope.

Lectures

Victoria & Albert Museum Patricia Baker, "Islamic Prayer Carpets", 2.30pm.

MEANINGS OF CHRISTMAS

The passing of the old and the mystery of the new

However commercialised it has become, Christmas is still a festival from which Jews feel excluded. But the secular New Year, argues Rabbi Jonathan Magonet, is a time for choosing – and belonging.

Jews find the secular New Year a bit of an anticlimax. After all, it's only a few months since we finished celebrating the spiritual marathon of our own Jewish New Year. In the 10 days between our New Year's Day and the Day of Atonement we worked our way through sin, repentance, fasting, for-giveness, a metaphorical death (the white gown we wear will one day be our shroud) and reconciliation with God. And the Festival of Succot, Tabernacles, that immediately follows, with its symbolic journey through the wilderness of life, concluding with the ecstatic festival of "Rejoicing in the Law", to mark the completion of the annual cycle of Biblical readings, and we're pretty much spiritually wrung dry.

After all that an evening of bubbly balloons and "Auld Lang Sync" has to

seem pretty tame. Even New Year resolutions feel out of place. We began the Day of Atonement with a formal confession that all our vows or oaths should be considered as null and void – a reference to the promises we make to God to be a better person. So having admitted that we cannot be trusted to keep such vows, creating a lot of New Year resolutions rings pretty hollow.

Besides, we have other Jewish New Years as well. There is a "New Year for Trees", to mark the beginning of spring in Israel, and a biblical "New Year for Kings". And 1 January is not the only new year in the secular calendar. We have a "New Year for Taxes" in April, another for academic studies in the autumn and even a "New Year for Car Number Plates" in the summer. New Years simply mark off time in useful chunks for particular purposes.

For my daughter and her school friends New Year's Eve marks the finish to the Christmas season. Christmas itself means a lot of good times on the part of the family. Friends and family get together, old family tensions often

come out so that everyone gets a bit ratty. (Jews have the same experience at the annual Passover family meal.) So the New Year is something of a relief since there are no such expectations of brotherly and sisterly love. Instead, for my daughter's circle, everything focuses on the New Year's Eve party, what to wear and who to go with. Even so, she added, it is usually a disappointment. And I also remember those lonely teenage midnights when everyone but me seemed to be partnered and having a ball when Big Ben struck. But at least we choose who we want to share New Year's Eve with, neither tradition nor family imposing itself upon us.

However much Christmas has been commercialised, at its heart there remains a Christian message. Assimilated Jews might even have their own Christmas tree, but they know that the festival is not really theirs. On the other hand, the New Year is utterly neutral. It is a secular occasion available to everyone of every faith or none.

What we celebrate together is actually a kind of shared belonging to this country and this culture. The end-of-the-year documentaries remind us that we have gone through these events together, and they are now part of our common memory. So we borrow a bit of Hogmanay from the Scots, and "Auld Lang Sync" becomes for a moment our song whether our ancestors invaded the country with the Normans or got off the boat as refugees a generation ago. The very neutrality of New Year's Eve helps it become a kind of unifying ritual for all who call this island their home.

It even has a "theology" of a kind as well. We mark the passing of time, select the events we choose to remember, and explain to ourselves what has brought us to this turning point in our lives. And we allow ourselves a moment of hope that the future will be better, that the bad things of the past will never come again, a hope sometimes as evanescent as our resolutions.

We celebrate the simple fact that we have survived to be together for one more such occasion. Our collective memory as a nation meets our hope for the future. Together we count down the seconds until no church bells, but rather the sombre tones of Big Ben, toll for the passing of the old and offer just a touch of unease before the mystery of the new.

Arise Sir Elton, and enjoy the joke. It really doesn't hurt



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It's that time of year again, when pop stars and football players, Olympic medal winners, comedians, bell-ringers and Brown Owls, astronomers and architects, microsurgeons and musicfest managers, Samaritans and swimming teachers, lollipop ladies and that other kind of lady that is quaintly described as being "in waiting", all get to be listed together in the annual New Year Honours list. And part of the ritual – obligatory, really – is for *The Independent* to agonise in the nicest possible way over why we bother with this business at all.

Once again, with certain ambiguity of purpose, we find ourselves devoting two pages of fine Norwegian spruce to listing a motley collection of names chosen by the Establishment to join (in a minor way) the Establishment, or at least to be given its condescending, lofty recognition, bless their hearts.

Why do we print this list? Well, for one thing, it's immensely enlightening and entertaining to read. You learn delightful things. (Did you



know that old "Fluff" Freeman is 70-70, for heaven's sake? Or that the creator of The Wombles is still up and about in Aldeburgh, of all places?) If

you were a Martian (or, say, an American – about the same thing when it comes to interpreting British social manners), you would find fascinating material for research on pages 18 and 19 of this newspaper.

Most prominent glory goes to a man called Elton Hector John, a chap who is considerably stranger than his name, which is anyway not his own, but an invented appellation which someone once thought would make an improvement on Reginald Dwight, a name that some might regard as stranger still. Mr Dwight's claim to having a sword slapped on his well-padded shoulder is ostensibly his service to charity and show-business (and probably football, for all we know); really, it's a populist gesture by the People's Establishment (defined as the Blair-Windor love-in) towards all those folk who found his funeral performance of "Candle in the Wind" their biggest emotional release of the year.

Let's be clear about this. Knights are characters who

joust up and down with lances, dressed in heavy metal and waving fancy crests. Sir Elton, as we must soon call him, is indeed prone to dressing up in outlandish costume, though somewhat less than he was. But quite why we continue to garland illustrious folk with titles that are best followed by names such as Lancelot and Galahad, it is hard to say.

The good side of the honours system is obvious. If you run your eye down that long list of MBEs and OBEs you are effectively tracing the backbone of decent, upstanding Britain. It is a roll-call of the kind of characters who keep thousands of institutions and communities and charities alive and busy. Behind many there is no doubt a story to warm the soul: the Suffolk postmistress who is no doubt the civic heart of Dalham; the Alderman woman whose services to the community include "particularly the Nativity play"; the founder of the Toot Hill Dance Band, wherever that may be. They, and the hos-

pice workers and fundraisers and primary school teachers who so deserve, at least once in their lives, to be recognised – yes, honoured – by the citizenry to whom they give so much.

But the honours list, also, is given over to antiquated imperial absurdities. The long lists of civil servants and soldiers picking up their Buggins's-turn gongs. The courtiers, with their bizarre lists of letters that are granted for simply doing their job – something that the rest of the nation does without much recognition. And then the even greater absurdities, of anti-Establishment intellectuals such as Eric Hobsbawm and David Lodge – to name but two – who nevertheless find it in themselves to accept orders of an empire which they ought to regard as an anachronism.

One long-standing angle of attack on the honours system is that it entrenches privilege and patronage in a debilitating way – a way that other, more modern countries do not find necessary. This is mostly nonsense.

For a start, many other countries have their own systems of honours, though admittedly less bedecked with garters and ribbons. Even Americans and Germans (in their guilds and associations) hold local banquets to honour people who are part of their gang. And the New Year list is rarely packed with very much in the form of repayment for services questionably rendered. Paul Hamlyn's elevation to the Lords is as appropriate a recognition as any other in today's list.

So, does the giving of these honours hurt anyone, apart from a handful of aspirants who feel they should not have been left out? Does it, in any real way, threaten our social fabric? Is it corrupting? Not at all. Is it an out-of-date, fusty practice in a supposedly modernising Britain? Most certainly. More pertinently, don't we really feel the whole thing is faintly daft? Without question. But then, many daft things are done in the name of cultural continuity.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Safe food

Sir: As enforcers of food safety legislation, we appreciate the comments in your leading article (23 December) on the need for the Food Safety Agency to enjoy public trust.

That "producer interests" may have played too strong a role in the formulation of food safety policy is a view with which enforcers concur. However, what consumers, food producers and enforcers want most – and quickly – is clear information. Impartial advice and considered actions by government are essential to protect both public health and food businesses.

The recent beef-on-the-bone regulations are a case in point. We made our position clear to the Government that the regulations as they stand are extraordinarily difficult to enforce. What we require is government direction and information to enable local authorities to enforce the regulations more effectively. As health professionals we are fully committed to measures taken to protect the public against BSE. We need guidance to achieve this.

One of the key arguments for the Food Safety Agency is that it would be able to provide this information while responding in a considered way to advice from scientific committees. This would avoid political pressures which can induce either unduly delayed or panicked responses, while the public, enforcers and food producers are supplied with information to minimise risks to public health.

MICHAEL COOKE
Chief Executive
Chartered Institute of
Environmental Health
London SE1

Sir: Creating a Countryside Ministry while breaking up the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) on the way (leading article, 23 December) may seem an attractive response to the Ministry of agriculture's failure to evolve from a ministry for farming, but could actually make a bad situation worse.



Radical heroes of the 20th-century Liberal tradition: David Lloyd George, Maynard Keynes, William Beveridge – and Tony Blair?

Blair and Lib Dems

Sir: According to Donald Macintyre ("Why Blair will soon invite Ashdown into the Cabinet", 30 December), Paddy Ashdown and Menzies Campbell would have subjected a post-election Blair offer of Cabinet posts to a test of "What's in it for the Liberal Democrats"? So why is it unreasonable to ask that question now? For that is the central question all party mem-

bers will rightly want answered. In our current electoral system the power of patronage for Cabinet places for individuals from minority parties lies with one party leader. But the not so distant future may bring proportional representation, when it would instead be up to the electorate to confer opportunities for coalitions between parties. That would mean formal negotiations on agreed programmes, not a blank-cheque. And PR-based

coalition politics would make merger unnecessary.

If Paddy Ashdown is offered a Cabinet post and accepts it he may make a significant statement about abandoning tribalism in British politics in favour of parties working together, but he will also be judged to have concluded that the Liberal Democrats have reached a high watermark of 46 Commons seats with nowhere else to go.

I look forward to some ro-

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Eurofighter wins

Sir: Towards the end of his diatribe against the Eurofighter, your business editor uses the phrase "given the existence of viable alternatives..." (business comment, 23 December)

There have always been only three alternatives to Eurofight-

er: to abdicate all defensive/offensive roles for the RAF, leaving it as simply a military air transport arm; to purchase Russian MiG and Sukhoi aircraft, which might well be the cheapest way of providing Strike Command with an ongoing role; but Russian aircraft do not enjoy the best reputation for reliability or support; or to purchase American aircraft – you have already pointed out that the F22 costs twice as much as Eurofighter, and to become dependent on America for one's military needs is a long and expensive road.

Any of these alternatives

has all the following results: the irrevocable loss of Britain's military air export business; the loss of about 100,000 jobs in the aviation sector; and the progressive loss of military aviation technology feeding into civil aviation.

A M M HODGES
Richmond, Surrey

South hits back

Sir: It must be a matter of regret for you that some of your readers are capable of, indeed proud of, blatant discrimination against people who happen to have been born

in a different place from them. Whether one is born north or south of a particular line in England is no more of a choice than whether one happens to have been born with a different skin colour or gender.

I suppose the best that can be said about your correspondents Derek Magrath and Tom Valentine (Letters, 27 December) is that they had the misfortune to have been raised in that most intolerant of cultures, Yorkshire, and therefore their ignorant bigotry stems from nurture not nature.

JOHN DUGGAN

London SW11

Cold meteorites

Sir: Charles Arthur ("Search for Greenland's thunderbolt", 16 December) perpetuates a popular misconception when he states that "On landing [a meteorite] would be incredibly hot, and melt its way through the toecap". Meteorites are cold when they land. Hence they preserve a record of their history in space.

When a natural object enters the atmosphere from space, its minimum velocity is about mach 40. Friction with the air causes the surface to melt and, as above Greenland, a bright fireball is produced. The melt on the surface is carried into the atmosphere and takes the heat with it, and the inside keeps the cold of space.

If the object breaks up or is small, it decelerates, the fireball goes out and it falls to Earth fairly gently, under gravity. It would make a shallow pit in soil or ice. If the object is large – over about 100 tonnes – and stays intact, it is hardly braked by the atmosphere and may strike the surface at hypersonic velocity to produce an explosion crater. In this case the meteorite is essentially destroyed.

ROBERT HUTCHISON,
Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire

The Herod bug

Sir: Miles Kington's explanation of King Herod's policy for the 0-2 year olds (22 December), according to recent new evidence from deciphered scrolls, is in doubt.

The policy arose from the great abacus crisis in the Roman taxation department. For years these had counted down from BC dates and could not easily be reversed when it came to AD. It was found that the problem would take two years to sort out. To keep the taxation records straight for the future it was necessary to eliminate the 0-2 year olds.

JOHN PICKIN
Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire

Something horrible happened at the New Money party



MILES
KINGTON

This is the last day of the Old Year, and we all know what that means.

It means you will all be going out tonight to behave disgracefully and get drunk, and we all know what that means.

It means tomorrow you will be sitting in a darkened room, wishing you had something light but challenging to read, something bracing but short, a kind of mental pick-me-up.

This is it.

This is a complete New Year's Eve mystery story.

There are enough clues scattered through the story for you to be able to work out the answer to the mystery.

Yes, even a hungover wreck like yourself should be able to work it out.

Right, here we go then with our brand-new Hogmanay tale, entitled:

"This is the last day of the Old Year, and we all know what that means."

It was New Year's Eve, and the guests were arriving at Parvenu Towers for Lord Parvenu's New Year's Eve party. The first Lord Parvenu had been created in the 1540s for services to Henry VIII (he had dissuaded him from marrying a seventh wife, for which Henry VIII was extremely grateful, though not as grateful as the intended wife was) and although the name of "parvenu" had suited him then, for he was indeed New Money, or "Ye New Money", the Parvenus had become one of the most tradi-

tional families in the country.

One tradition they had established was their grand New Year's Eve Party, which every year had a different theme.

One year in the 1890s it had been a Bring Your Own Wild Animal Party, at which the eighth Lord Parvenu was unfortunately mauled by an emu.

One year in the 1920s the young ninth Lord Parvenu had organised a Marathon Dancing New Year's Eve Party. The marathon dancing had been so enthusiastic that all the guests had ended up 26 miles away at someone else's house.

During the Second World War, the New Year's Eve Party tradition had never been broken – one year they had had a "Beat The Blackout – Bomb Us

If You Dare!" Party, at which all the lights were left blazing.

German bomber pilots flocked from miles around to bombard Parvenu Towers, but they were all fairly plastered, it being New Year's Eve, and the best they could manage was a direct hit on Parvenu Park, creating a crater which later became Parvenu Lake.

Now, in the 1940s, it was time for the Parvenu Party again. This year Lord Parvenu (the 11th) had decreed that it should be a Guess-The-Contestants-of-the-Millennium-Dome Party.

"It's sort of fancy dress," he explained. "You dress up as someone you think will be commemorated in the Millennium, or you come along as

someone you think will be involved in the creation of the Dome. There will be a prize for the best idea."

"And after that?" someone asked him.

"After that we all get pissed as usual," he said.

Everyone was there. There were members of the Cabinet. There were members of the Shadow Cabinet. There were research writers for *Kitty Kelly*, there were Andrew Lloyd Webber lookalikes, poor chaps, there were minor members of the Royal Family (so minor that they had never been divorced), and there was the artist formerly known as Madonna.

There was also a Middle-Eastern looking gentleman whom nobody recognised, strik-

ing-looking with piercing eyes. "Is it Alan Yentob?" someone wondered.

"Is it Mohammed Al Fayed's younger son that nobody knows about?" wondered someone else.

"My gosh, is it perhaps Salman Rushdie and will he get murdered at midnight?" gasped someone else.

Midnight came nearer. The party grew wilder. The coming and going of helicopters on the Helipad (where Parvenu Lake had been filled in for the very purpose) grew more purposeful.

Just before midnight, the man who looked like Salman Rushdie went up to Lord Parvenu and whispered in his ear. Lord Parvenu smiled and reached in his pocket. He hand-

ed something to the man looking like Rushdie, who handed something back. As midnight struck, the man looking like Rushdie was talking on a mobile phone, and you could have heard him say: "We've got it! And here's the heading! Pusher Parvenu Caught Red-Handed!"

OK, that's the story. Have you solved the mystery?

That's right! The man looking like Rushdie was actually a *Mirror* reporter entrapping Lord Parvenu into an ill-advised sale of white powder.

But don't worry. There was a happy ending. Before he could file his story, the reporter and pushed him into the Parvenu Safari Park. The hyenas fed well that night.

23/COMMENT

hurt

Rich countries get help.
It's the way of the worldDIANE
COYLE
ON IMMORAL
DEBT POLICY

I may be an unusually mean-spirited person, but there always comes a point during the Christmas shopping season when I balk at shelling out more money. I spend cheerfully on my nearest and dearest, then find myself skimping on the presents bought from a sense of obligation than affection.

And then, funny enough, the purse strings loosen again when the New Year sales start.

It may be just me, but I take comfort from the fact that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is just as bad. It has spearheaded a massive rescue package to save South Korea from a catastrophic financial crisis, making available emergency funds of up to \$100bn over the next few months.

Philanthropic enough, you may think, except that it reveals a starkly selfish set of priorities. For it has taken the IMF, following the lead set by leaders of the Group of Seven industrial countries, most of this decade to agree grudgingly on less than \$10bn-worth of debt relief for some of the poorest countries in the world, to be eked out over several years.

The only conclusion you can draw from this is that we, in the richest countries in the globalised world economy, collectively don't give a hoot for the poorest. But we will give generously to the ranks of the nearly-rich, when they get into a bit of financial bother, because of the risk that their crisis will spill over into our economies.

This is short-sighted as well as immoral. But let us start with the morality. By any calculation the debt burden on poor nations is crippling and inhuman. For example, Mozambique's debt service last year amounted to double its combined spending on health and education. It is a country where infectious disease kills a quarter of all children under five, and where two-thirds of the population is illiterate.

In Bolivia, where nine out of 10 rural people live in poverty, and only 16 per cent have access to safe water, debt repayments this year have been three times the rural relief budget.

Both countries will qualify for the debt relief package, known as the Highly Indebted Poor Countries, or HIPC, initiative. But the reduction in their interest payments to the IMF, World Bank and rich governments will be small and slow. In a decade's time they may have reached a point where their debt burden is at last shrinking because they have paid enough interest.

It was a struggle to get the meagre HIPC initiative approved by the international community – a struggle in which both Gordon Brown and Kenneth Clarke, his predecessor as chancellor of the Exchequer, have played an honourable part. Germany and Japan, and to a lesser extent Italy and the US, have held out firmly against greater generosity.

But what is astonishing is their belief that very poor countries will carry on

monthly paying interest, over more than a generation, on debts often incurred by corrupt and brutal dictators. Never before in history has this kind of debt burden been repaid.

Take an example from the First World War. The great economist John Maynard Keynes calculated in 1921 that if Britain had to continue repaying its war loans from the United States, it would take 60 years of interest payments equal to what was then the annual budget for education, or to one new hospital a month. The debt from 1914-1918 would not have been cleared until 1984.

Keynes was also an ardent critic of the decision to force Germany to make punitive reparations. He asked: "Will the discontented peoples of Europe be willing for a generation to come so to order their lives that an appreciable part of their daily produce may be available to meet a foreign payment?" Obviously not. He concluded that nations could not make another people pay for debts incurred by the leaders of a previous generation.

After the Second World War, the Allies applied the lesson learnt from the disaster of demanding reparations after the Great War in 1953 half of Germany's international debts were cancelled outright by a conference of bankers meeting in London. According to Jürgen Kaiser, of the University of Vienna's Department of Economics: "The London agreement was an important milestone on the way to West Germany's economic miracle."

The only difference in the case of today's Third World debt burden is that Western governments do not see it as a crisis. South Korea is a crisis because its financial markets have been nosediving, threatening to take Wall Street and London down with them. But clearly, death, despair and poverty in countries outside the financial loop do not constitute a crisis.

These priorities may satisfy short-term self-interest, which politicians want to ask their taxpayers for even a penny extra in tax for the world's poor and starving? But they could do huge long-term economic damage. The growth of trade and overseas investment has been an enormous boost to the rich economies, and as the international links spread ever further, should continue to be so. Our prosperity is built not only on our own efforts but also on those of other countries, in what should be a mutually enriching process.

By making it so painfully obvious that some countries – those most like us – matter vastly more than those small and faraway nations of which we know little, the IMF and G7 risk a backlash that will halt the beneficial, interlinked growth of the world economy. The rest of the world does not like the economic recipe of our political and financial classes. And if globalisation is not seen to be for everybody, it will not benefit anybody.

Ironically, the backlash may even come from South Korea, where ungrateful workers are more likely to blame the IMF for tough measures that will put them out of their jobs than to thank it for stamping up billions of dollars in loans to stabilise the currency. There will certainly be more human disasters in the very poorest countries, not that these have so far prodded the financiers into mending their ways.

I may be a Scrooge about Christmas presents, but I can find it in my mean spirit to switch my tax contribution to the Millennium Dome or the National Lottery Fund to cancelling a chunk of Third World debt by the year 2000. It seems worth it for a more prosperous and peaceful world. The trouble is that the spirit of taxpayer generosity will have to spread far more widely to make any difference.

The answer to life and the universe?
Well, that depends on the questionOLIVER
MORTON
FINDS WEB
SITE INSIGHTS

The new year is traditionally a time for the imperative. I will lose five kilos; control my temper better; learn the bassoon; enhance my homepage with Java; whatever. This year, why not take a break and shift to the interrogative instead. Don't resolve. Question. Don't focus on what you're not doing, but look at what you don't know. Ask yourself a few questions to which you would really like answers. They can be questions about anything in the world – one of the advantages of questions over resolutions is that you don't have to limit them to the personal. That said, though, the questions will be personal too: what you want to know says a lot about you.

This suggestion is inspired by a parlour game on the world wide web. Edge (<http://www.edge.org>) is a sort of salon run by John Brockman, a literary agent and writer who went a long way towards cornering the market in scientist-writers during the post-Stephen Hawking science-writing boom. For the past year it has been home to often lively, sometimes obscure and almost always ambitious discussions about emerging insights into the sciences and the new digital world. It is a sort of ongoing digital Start the Week, with more nuts and bolts and less Melvyn Bragg.

For Edge's first anniversary, Brockman asked everyone who contributes – an in-crowd of his clients, various other scientists and science writers and a selection of the "digerati", by which is meant people who discourse on new communication technologies with some sort of authority – to send him the question that mattered most to them. For anyone with an interest in what science and technology have to offer humanity the result is provocative, not only in the questions this reasonably influential bunch is asking itself, but also in those it passes over.

Many of the questions are firmly centred in the questioner's own research, sometimes so set that they seem reasonably obscure to anyone outside the discipline involved. Steven Pinker, author of *How the mind works*, asks a question about one detail of that working: "How does the brain represent the meaning of a sentence?" Alan Guth, the man who dreamt up the notion of



What they really, really think about: a Hubble telescope image showing light from galaxies that has taken up to 15 billion years to reach Earth – about the time the Universe was created. Those contributing to the web debate were far more concerned about that kind of topic than more earthly matters

Photograph: Nasa

cosmic inflation as an explanation for the evenness, and much of the bigness, of the Big Bang, asks how we can know which sorts of universe are more probable than others.

Some of these insider questions are incisive. Richard Dawkins cuts to the heart of his own work by asking "What might a second specimen of the phenomenon that we call life look like?" Like geology, biology is a one-off science: there is only one Earth, and all life on it is one family, with a common ancestor. Only by studying other lives elsewhere can we come to understand how much of life is necessarily the way that it is and how much is just the way things are on Earth. Life forms elsewhere may be hard to find, but probably easier to make sense of than Guth's alternative universes.

Various Edgies asked after these aliens, wondering whether we would recognise them if we found them (good question) and what they would mean for established religion. Others wondered if we might not build them ourselves. A range of questions, mostly asked by people who work in the catch-all field of "complexity", effectively ask what is special about arrangements of

matter that are capable of agency, and can we create new ones, possibly using computers?

An allied question, and possibly the most interesting of the bunch, comes from William Calvin, a theoretical neurophysiologist (and an amateur climatologist, too, but that's another story). "How will minds expand once we understand the brain makes mind?" Part of this question's strength is in its breadth. You can treat the question as being about psychoactive drugs, or computer enhancements, or new teaching techniques, or whatever you like. But it is equally impressive in its scope.

Consider an analogon from history. Before we understood how cells make proteins, we could not make any of them ourselves, and had to make do with those nature provided.

Now we understand. We use designer proteins for many medical purposes – and will soon use them for a vast range of technological and agricultural ends. If we can understand how brains produce thinking, the increase in possibilities might be just as large, and far more personal. Asking us to think about how we use those new possibilities asks us about our moral and social worlds as

solute nature of moral truth and lots of other topics) makes them cringe and they are henceforth not Jews and not Christians, and the hell with old time religion?" – there is quite a lot about the need for new spiritual values.

Some of these questions are more overtly religious than others, but the plaintive requests for a more long-term approach to the world and its resources like Stewart Brand's "How do we make long-term thinking automatic and common instead of difficult and rare?" seem much of a piece with the more overtly spiritual, if rather instrumental, question posed by Colin Tudge, one of Britain's best science writers: "Can we devise a religion for the 21st century and beyond that is plausible and yet avoids banality – one that people see the need for? What would it be like?" And the cosmologists often sound religious anyway: John Barrow, professor of astronomy at the University of Sussex, asks: "Is the Universe a great mechanism, a great computation, a great symmetry, a great accident, or a great thought?"

But while they acknowledge the spiritual, these seekers after truth ignore many more earthly and more pressing problems. No one asks how to cure cancer, or how many Brits are going to die of mad cow disease. No questions bear directly on the development of the Third World, or on gender equality, or on poverty. Some questions doubtless have such concerns at their heart, but they tend to be phrased in rather universalist, abstract language. There are social concerns here, but they are largely couched in terms of individuals and biological; have we evolved to be prejudiced, or murderous, or capable of only some sorts of intellectual endeavour?

It should not be surprising that 100 intellectuals discussing on a website end up a little detached from the real world. But that detachment underscores what some of the questioners were asking themselves: how do we get science to do good? As yet, we do not know. Science, at this sort of level, is still very much an intellectual and personal set of questions, not a social one. We are quite good at getting science-based technology to make money, but we are a long way from understanding how to make it responsive to people's desires, needs and goals.

The question posed by Steven Rose, professor of biology at the Open University, is: "How to ensure that we develop sciences and technologies that serve the people, are open to democratic scrutiny and which assist rather than hinder humans to live harmoniously with the rest of nature". It is a specialist's way of asking one of the best questions of all: how can I make things better, not just for myself, but for everything and everyone? If that is not the question you are asking yourself for the new year, what is?

Is it time for that Cabinet minister (nudge, nudge: you know the one) to grass on himself?

PAUL
ALLEY
THE PAIN OF
PARENTAL FAME

So who is the cabinet minister whose son has been accused of drug-dealing? The question was raised at a dinner party in London the other night – indeed, it must have been raised at a thousand such occasions all over the country in the past few days. Half of those present on this particular occasion knew the identity of the minister, because they had direct access to people who knew. One person had come across it on the Internet. Others had worked it out from the way the stories had been written in the papers. By the time the evening was over, of course, everyone was in on the secret. And with the subsequent parties of the week the tawdry fact will ripple through what we now call the chattering classes.

Once they were called the metropolitan elite, and there was a time when all manner of political titbits circulated among them; gossip denied to the general public. Sometimes it was just titillating. At other times whispers of turpitude led to mysterious resignations in high places. At its high point it concerned itself with clandestine scandal around the royal household, which eventually led to the abdication of King Edward VIII.

Democracy and an unfettered press have, by and large, put an end to the notion that "everyone who counts, knows". Today it is generally affirmed that there is above all one group which counts and which also needs to know: the electorate. But does it need to know about the adolescent misdemeanours of politician's children?

Some have said that the cabinet minister concerned acted cynically in frog-marching the unfortunate youth down to the local police station after the politician received a call from the *Mirror* to report that one of its 30-year-old journalists had bought £10 worth of cannabis from the 17-year-old boy. The politician, they said, had

shopped his or her own son to protect their political career.

That reaction is unfair. Most responsible parents would have done the same thing on the grounds that immediately confronting the problem would minimise the damage. In the unlikely event that the police did prosecute, the teenager's swift contrition would undoubtedly lead most magistrates towards leniency.

The dilemma which confronts the minister is a different one. It may be the right thing for a father to persuade his son to confess to the police, but should a politician not also own up to the public? As a parent he knows this is a bad idea: identifying himself would be tantamount to doing what he hopes his prompt action has averted – once the epithet "Minister X's drug-dealer son" gets into the newspaper cuttings it will forever dog the unhappy young man and make him a prisoner of his past. Though most of those in his circle of

acquaintances and schoolmates will already know by now – and probably will not disapprove of him reportedly selling £10 worth of dope in a pub, the 17-year-old's parents may fear that future employers could take a different view.

But what is best for a parent is not necessarily what is best for a politician. If that minister speaks now, or in the future, on home affairs, education, health, social security or any one of the portfolios where "parental responsibility" can become an issue, it is hard to see how his or her credibility might not be called into question. This government has made so great a point of the issue – whether in the area of curfews for unruly children or single parents' responsibility to work – that it has already laid itself open to general accusations of a new puritanism. Even if malicious Tory backbenchers do not spice their question with asides to the effect that "I blame the parents myself", the

minister can be sure that the press will be watching like hawks, or vultures, for any trace of inconsistency, any suspicion that policy is being reinforced or diluted, or any sign that this hapless parent is having to pass certain aspects of business to colleagues leaving.

It may be right for a father to persuade his son to confess but should not a politician also own up?

ing him or her a lame duck minister in those areas. In the event of anything like that the press might reveal the full sorry facts.

Lord Wakeham has been huffing and puffing that the new *Press Complaints Commission* code of practice forbids such revelation. True, it does say

under Clause 6: "where material about the private life of a child is published, there must be justification for publication other than the fame, notoriety or position of his or her parents or guardian". But the code also allows exemptions where publication can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. Clause 1(iii) of this covers material "preventing the public from being misled by some statement or action".

Newspaper lawyers have already suggested that shifts in the nuance of political pronouncements on the question of parental responsibility might well constitute a defence in the present case.

Certainly the position has not been helped by the arrest of the *Mirror* journalist who set out to expose the minister's teenage son. There were those who expressed glee at the arrest of a reporter engaged in what they regard as meretricious journalism with its sanctimonious pronouncements

over such an absurd common-place little crime. But it is an unhelpful development. For a start, there will be those for whom it smacks of "who will rid me of this turbulent press?" But more importantly it drags into the case the whole question of the freedom of the press. It was politically maladroit because it has seriously upped the ante.

The dilemma between parent and politician is not a new one. It was the one faced by Harriet Harman over her son's education, and which she resolved by declaring that her responsibility as a parent must always come first. It may well be that the un-named cabinet minister with the rebellious son has made the same decision. For all we know his resignation – or a request to be moved to a different portfolio – may be preoccupying the Prime Minister in his Seychelles holiday hideaway and a reshuffle will be forced. Or perhaps he is just sitting tight, and hoping it will all go away.

We won't plunge the country into recession, says Eddie George

The pound's high exchange rate should prove unsustainable, while the economy needs to slow down, according to the Governor of the Bank of England. But Eddie George does not intend to plunge the country into recession to meet the inflation target, as he told Diane Coyle.

The Bank of England has raised interest rates four times since Gordon Brown gave it the power to do so on 6 May. The most frequent criticism made of the newly independent Bank is therefore that it has been trigger-happy, over-reacting to scant inflationary signals when the pound is already too strong for comfort.

The Governor, reviewing the events of the past year, denies the charge of being an "inflation nutter". Framed in his magnificent office by one austere piece of tinsel, he told *The Independent*: "Of course, when we get a situation as we have had where the strength of the exchange rate is exaggerated, the people who are directly affected by that will feel the discomfort."

The Confederation of British Industry rubbed this home yesterday, voicing a new year wish for a lower exchange rate. But despite the dilemma for setting interest rates posed by the strong pound, Mr George insisted: "We need a slowdown in the economy next year, there's no question." Although there are uncertainties about the timing and degree of this slowdown in the economy, Mr George added: "We're not at the point where we need to plunge it into recession again."

He went on to explain that the new Monetary Policy Committee, created by the Chancellor to set interest rates, would not feel bound to keep inflation within 1 per cent, either way, of the

2.5 per cent target at all costs. If the target measure goes beyond those bounds, the Governor has to send a letter to the Chancellor explaining why.

"People talk in terms of a range as if this was something we can't go beyond. I don't see it like that," the Governor said. Although hastening to add that he did not see inflation going outside the range in the near term, he said: "If there were a very powerful reason for going outside that 1 per cent either side, then I think that's what the Monetary Policy Committee would advise the Chancellor."

Mr George was also keen to stress that setting monetary policy is an uncertain process.

Under the old system, he had one meeting a month to try to persuade the Chancellor to take the Bank's advice. By May, he said: "We were clearly behind the game." It was not until August that the Bank could credibly claim policy was back on track.

"What we have now is a genuinely open debate with people exploring alternative interpretations. What that reflects is the imprecision of the process. I don't think you ever get it exactly right," Mr George said.

Even so, he professed himself reasonably happy with the current policy. He downplayed fears of general upward pressure on pay, a concern in the City, saying the behaviour of the jobs market so far had been encouraging.

There was even a faint hint that the Bank might be taking a more relaxed view about falling unemployment than many observers have assumed. "Clearly, if we could run the economy at a higher level of employment without this producing upward pressure on pay, then everybody would be happy, even the inflation nutters at the Bank of England," Mr George said.

He said that, despite the complaints of exporters, higher interest rates were only part of the explanation for the strong pound. Rates "will peak,

may already have peaked, I really don't know," he said.

"But you can't explain much of the appreciation in those terms, so we conclude that it's a question of market expectations about the nature and characteristics of the euro. Perhaps as we get closer they will change."

Along with gaining independence for the Bank, Mr George rates Gordon Brown's statement clarifying the Government's intentions towards the single currency as one of the high points of 1997. He bills himself as a "Euro-pragmatist".

"I have never opposed the principle in a doctrinaire way. But I have never felt the time and the place were right, certainly not for the UK."

Mr George predicted that monetary union will go ahead with a broad membership, as the markets expect. But he clearly remains sceptical about the tensions bound to be generated by a "one interest rate fits all" policy for countries with very different economic structures.

The low point in the past year had been the loss of the Bank's responsibility for bank supervision. Mr George said: "It wasn't the principle, it was the manner," he explained.

However, his relationship with Mr Brown has improved from that low point, and the Governor's contract, which expires next spring, is widely expected to be extended. Mr George, who would clearly like to stay on, said the Chancellor had not yet discussed this with him.

Apart from the Bank's difficult task in setting interest rates at the right level, Mr George picked out Asia as the main cloud on the horizon for 1998. "There is no question that Asia is serious," he said.

Is it more serious than previous crises? "It's right in the forefront of the mind, it's the immediate problem. But if you go back to the debt crisis of the early 1980s, I don't know that I would feel it is worse than that."



Eddie George surveys a model of the City of London: The loss of the Bank of England's responsibility for bank supervision had been a low point, he said

Venture capitalists fear the bubble may burst after another record year

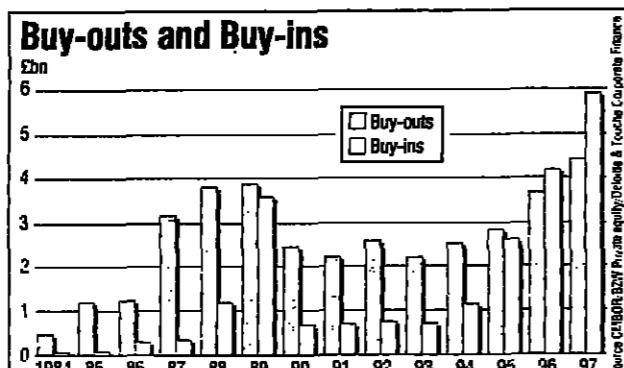
Britain's venture capitalists are on a roll. In the past 12 months, they have spent more than £10bn taking companies private – a 33 per cent increase on the figure for 1996 and a new record. Peter Thal Larsen hears worries that the bubble might be about to burst.

Given the vast sums of cash venture capital firms still have available for investment – over £1bn was raised by new funds during the year – 1998 is unlikely to be any different.

But some observers, including a number of senior venture capitalists, see signs of an unsustainable boom. "At this stage of the cycle, there is a growing worry that the next transaction may be a deal too far," says Tom Lamb, a senior director of BZW Private Equity.

He points to the increasing size of private equity deals. The £900m CinVen is believed to have offered Reed Elsevier for IPC, its consumer magazine stable, just the latest in a string of large transactions. Other deals include the £700m buyout of bookmaker William Hill by Nomura, the Japanese bank, and the £515m put up by Legal & General to acquire BTR's pensions business.

Venture capitalists are victims of their own success. Since



the recession of the early 1990s, most have generated returns on their investments of 30 per cent or more a year – comfortably outperforming the stock market.

Money has also flowed in from the US, where the returns from venture capital have recently been lower. Of the funds raised in the past year, experts reckon as much as half has come from American investors.

The point is that funds are getting larger: in 1997 venture capital groups Schroders, Doughty Hanson, Charterhouse and Candover each raised buyout funds worth more than £1bn. To invest the cash they then have to concentrate on larger deals – usually with a value of £50m or more.

But experts question whether there is an adequate supply of deals of that size. "In the early 1990s companies had to sell because they were strapped for cash. Now they have strong balance sheets," says one venture capitalist.

But many venture capitalists are taking a more hands-on approach with groups they have invested in. The result is intense com-

petition. "In the UK you now have a classic auction with four or five companies looking at each transaction," says Tim Wright, assistant director at Apax Partners.

Many venture capitalists are getting it hard to invest their funds sensibly. For example, Charterhouse Development Capital – best known for its buyout of the Porterbrook train leasing group – has been sitting on an £800m fund since May, but has yet to invest a penny.

A frequent complaint is that funds like CinVen – which can draw on the huge British Coal, Railways and Barclays Bank pension funds – are pushing up prices by overpaying for deals.

But CinVen, which tops the UK buyout league for 1997 with deals worth £1.87bn, says its success is the result of its willingness to fund additional investment in the companies it backs.

But many venture capitalists are taking a more hands-on approach with groups they have invested in. The result is intense com-

American Airlines, alleging that the tie-up breached US anti-trust law. A BA spokesman said: "We are delighted that Judge Cedarbaum has ruled in our favour on these issues. We always knew we were in the right and while the judgment comes as no surprise it is very satisfying."

The anti-trust claims brought against BA by USAirways are not the same as those lodged by

– Michael Harrison

BA wins case against its former partner in US courts

British Airways and Virgin Atlantic were at loggerheads again last night after BA indicated it was confident of victory at least in its "dirty trick" battle in the US courts with the rival airline.

The renewed optimism in the BA camp followed the decision by a New York judge to throw out an anti-trust action brought against BA by its former partner USAirways.

Virgin lodged a claim for \$1bn damages in October 1993, alleging BA was monopolising the transatlantic market, distorting competition and running a "dirty tricks" operation to gain Virgin's passengers.

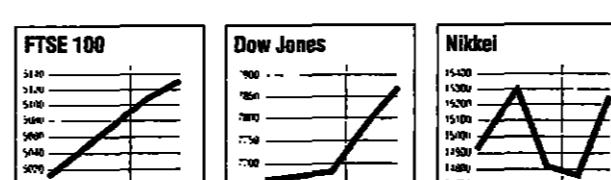
But on Monday, Judge Michael Cedarbaum, who is hearing both cases, dismissed three main claims by USAirways against BA and its new alliance partner.

Virgin, however, BA executives believe the judge's decision to throw out the USAirways case bodes well for how she will approach Virgin's claims.

A Virgin spokesman described this as "a load of tosh" adding: "There is no relevance between the two cases and to say otherwise reflects total ignorance."

– Michael Harrison

STOCK MARKETS



Dow Jones index and graph as at 5pm

Indices	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5132.30	10.00	0.20	5367.30	4036.90	3.38
FTSE 250	4768.10	32.00	0.76	4963.80	3884.20	3.36
FTSE All Share	2466.50	11.20	0.45	2570.50	2013.40	3.38
FTSE SmallCap	2407.74	11.09	0.46	2507.68	1899.78	3.36
FTSE MidCap	2367.40	10.89	0.46	2407.40	2169.20	3.45
FTSE Pensions	1995.40	5.70	0.46	1346.50	1219.90	3.39
FTSE AIM	989.00	3.30	0.33	1139.00	965.90	1.17
Dow Jones	7886.39	75.73	0.97	8299.03	6552.21	1.74
Nikkei	15298.74	483.52	3.27	20910.79	14484.21	1.02
Hong Kong	10755.21	252.22	2.40	16820.51	8778.88	3.94
Dax	4249.68	52.32	1.25	4459.83	3633.78	1.88

INTEREST RATES



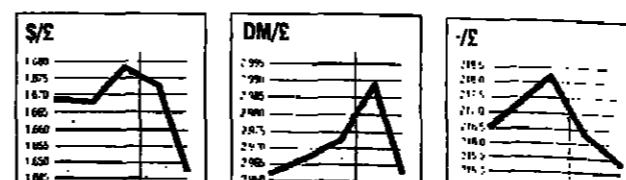
Money Market Rates

Index	3 month	1 yr chg	1 year	1 yr chg	Long bond	1 yr chg
UK	7.68	1.13	7.69	0.66	6.33	-1.18
US	5.81	0.25	5.97	0.18	5.80	-0.50
Japan	0.79	0.29	0.74	0.16	1.94	-0.83
Germany	3.64	0.48	3.93	0.68	5.37	-0.41

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg	Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chg
Schroders	1731.00	101.00	6.01	BDC Group	991.00	-100.00	-2.84
Laing	276.00	9.00	3.37	Tesco	496.00	-11.00	-2.17
Colgate	155.00	5.00	3.33	Marks & Spencer	597.00	-13.00	-2.13
Reckitt and Col	962.00	27.00	2.89	Waitrose	476.00	-8.00	-1.65

CURRENCIES



Pound

At 5pm	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Chg	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6547	-1.59c	1.6905	Sterling	0.6043	+1.57p
D-Mark	2.9633	-2.45p	2.6298	D-Mark	1.7905	+0.33p
Yen	215.36	-1.65	198.31	Yen	130.15	+0.25
E index	105.60	+0.80	95.60	S Index	108.70	+0.30

25/BUSINESS

Harrison's pays
£280m for US
chemicals group

Harrison's & Crosfield accelerates
its transformation from
a conglomerate to a specialist
chemicals group. Yesterday, the
group's deal to buy a US
chemicals producer, Business
Corporation, was completed. Harrison's
also revealed a large
surprise to its shareholders.



OUTLOOK
ON HOW
GLOBALISATION
BECAME THE GREAT
THEME OF 1997

It's an awful word, admittedly, but "globalisation", both of the world economy and business strategy, does seem to have been the big theme of 1997 for business and finance. When you think about it, virtually all the significant business and financial events of the year have been driven by the perceived need to adapt to progressive integration of the world economy. It scarcely needs saying that this process is by no means a new one; it is as ancient as trade itself. All the same, we do now seem to be at something of a watershed of development. Over the past year there has been a quantum leap, a huge acceleration of the process.

The most obvious manifestation of this has been in the economic crisis and accompanying market turmoil of the Far East. No national economy, it now appears, can remain immune to the power and disciplines of international capital; the *de rigueur*, semi-corrupt, cronyism of these economies has been rudely exposed and the currencies and equity markets of the region have suffered accordingly. Capital pursues the highest returns, and, perhaps belatedly, but certainly decisively, it has made up its mind that much of what was going on in the Far East was protected and uneconomic.

The triumph of the American economic model has been an integral part of the progressive globalisation through the movement of capital of the world economy. Indeed, the word "globalisation" may be a bit of a misnomer, for what is happening is not so much a homogenisation of different forms of economic organisation and management as a world-wide mimicking of the

US economy, the integration of the world into the American way of doing things.

This has been the year in which the *Asian economic model, and other forms of communiarian capitalism, have been finally discredited*. Japan and her protec-tionist ways have been humbled as never before to the extent that even her most traditional and conservative leaders now accept that Anglo-Saxon style structural reform is the only way out of a vicious deflationary circle of monetary and fiscal tightening. Capital and the conscience free, often brutal way in which it moves about is perhaps the largest part of this process but the free movement of intellectual property, technology and skills across national boundaries that has been a feature of recent years is the other part of the equation.

Paradoxically, the new Labour Government has been able to embrace this process in Britain with a degree of enthusiasm that eluded its Conservative predecessor, which philosophically ought to have been much more in tune with it. The Bank of England has finally been granted independent control over monetary policy while Gordon Brown is proving himself a much tougher Chancellor in terms of fiscal discipline than Kenneth Clarke. For the first time in recent memory, a clear strategy for economic management into the indefinite future has been laid out, and most people accept that ministers are going to stick to it.

Combined with the last Government's labour and capital market reforms, putting Britain well ahead of the wave in terms of structural reform in Europe, this has allowed Britain to bask in an almost

unprecedented degree of approval from financial markets. One result of this has been a strong pound, which may be something British industry is going to have to learn to live with.

The change of Government has also brought about a sea change in Britain's attitude to and relationship with Europe, including the single European currency. If the truly global market place still has a way to go yet, it is about to become a reality in Europe bringing about, for the first time this century, a trading block on a par with that of the US. New Labour has reformed Britain's position on the single currency in a way that now makes early participation at least possible.

Focus and consolidation have been the twin mantras driving the corporate sector this year. Again, the progressive breakdown of national barriers across industries as diverse as telecommunications, banking and engineering has been the sub-text for the jargon. The need to perform in an increasingly competitive international market place has driven managements to "focus" on their core capabilities and skills. This has been accompanied by consolidation within industries, both at a national and international level, in order to bring about economies of scale and better serve the needs of more demanding and better informed customers.

At its most ambitious, this process was epitomised by British Telecom's bid for MCI, one of the US's largest long-distance telecommunications carriers. The merger drew some hostile comment from the press and certain parts of the City and it may

well be that the target was misconceived. Alternatively, BT may just have been ahead of its time in its attempt to establish the global telecommunications company for the Americans eventually closed ranks and outbid BT.

The year end has brought with it the world's most ambitious banking merger to date – that of Switzerland's top two banks, Swiss Bank Corporation and Union Bank of Switzerland. In its wake has followed a whole host of me-too calls to national regulators. Martin Taylor of Barclays has gone public with his view that British banks should be allowed to respond with their own mergers. In the City, the UBS/SBC merger is bringing about a further shake-out in the investment banking sector with the loss of up to 3,000 jobs as UBS Phillips and Drew is subsumed by SBC Warburg.

Meanwhile, NatWest and Barclays have given up the investment banking quest entirely, finally admitting they are unequal to the task of competing on cost and market reach with Wall Street's bulge bracket operators. The City, that most international of market places, is itself falling victim to the process of globalisation.

Elsewhere, Guinness and Grand Metropolitan have merged to create the world's largest drinks combine. ICI has reinvented itself by selling off its diverse bulk chemical interests to more appropriate managers and buying Unilever's specialty chemicals business. Unilever has meanwhile chosen to "focus" on its core consumer products and BTR is selling off half its assets so as to concentrate more

effectively on the needs of its main engineering businesses.

Another key pressure on managements this year as never before has been to maximise the use of capital in the most cost-effective way. This has spawned a legion of share buy-backs, special dividends and other forms of capital repayment. Again this is a phenomenon imported from the US which looks set only to accelerate over the next few years. And again, since cost of capital is now viewed as a key constituent of international competitiveness, it has its roots in the process of globalisation.

All these pressures of the old year are going to be present in even greater form in the new. We live in a time of great economic change and opportunity. Despite the traumas of the Far East and the deflationary brake they will be applying to the world economy, we also live in a period that justifies great optimism. The challenge for policy makers as we enter the next millennium is not so much that of attempting to slow or accelerate the process of globalisation. An unstoppable momentum has already developed and it is too late for that.

Rather, it is to address the easily put to one side and socially destabilising side effects of the process – the growing gap between rich and poor and the environmental degradation that goes with it. The world may be integrating as never before, but it is also dividing as never before – into the haves and the have-nots. On that pessimistic note, and for those readers who have got this far, a prosperous and happy new year to all.

1997: The year the markets cheered a Labour victory

This year was a roller-coaster for investors, businesses and their leaders: The stock market surged to a new high and then fell back as the Asian crisis started to bite. A spate of takeovers and demergers saw some of the UK's best known corporate names disappear while some of the leading personalities in the City bowed out of the limelight. Chris Godsmark, Nigel Cope, John Willcock and Andrew Yates review an eventful year.

JANUARY:

The new year got off to a flying start as £1m-a-year "superwoman" Nicola Horlick was publicly despatched from her job as head of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell's £18bn pensions fund business. She flew to Frankfurt to remonstrate unsuccessfully with the Bank's German owners with a press pack in tow.

British Airways' attempts to forge an alliance with American Airlines were grounded, as the European Commission and US rivals piled on the pressure.

For thousands of building society investors, 1998 promised to be a year of windfall payouts. Halifax revealed it would give 8 million members 200 free shares when it floated on the stock market in June.

Pearson named Marjorie Scardino as new chief executive of the media empire and *Financial Times* publisher – the first woman appointed to the helm of a FTSE 100 company. On 2 January, the FTSE 100 index opened at 4079.9, an 11.6 per cent rise from the previous year, while the pound was worth 2.63 German marks.

FEBRUARY:

Ms Scardino's honeymoon ended abruptly as Pearson broke the news of "accounting errors" at its US Penguin Books business, costing it £100m. The irregularities were found to be the work of just one employee.

Shares soared in a stock market tiddler, LaniTrust, as rumours circulated that its leading light, a 31-year-old entrepreneur called Andrew Regan, was planning an audacious bid for the Co-Op. Yorkshire Electricity became the last regional power company to be bought in the wave of US acquisitions. The buyers, AEP of Ohio and PS Colorado, paid £1.5bn. February also saw a landmark demerger, as British Gas split itself into two companies.

The disagreement over interest rate policy intensified between Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England and the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke. With one eye on the election Mr Clarke blocked a rate rise, though the pound continued to soar.

MARCH:

NatWest's investment banking business was plunged into crisis as the bank revealed a £77m "hole" on interest rate options contracts. Senior managers came under attack, which Martin Owen, chief executive of NatWest Markets, tried to deflect by forgoing £200,000 of his £500,000 bonus.



A year to remember: (clockwise from top left) Chris Evans gets into bed with Richard Branson after buying Virgin Radio, Marjorie Scardino takes over as chief executive at Pearson, Gordon Brown sees red as he launches Sets and Nicola Horlick departs in a blaze of glory

house agreed to merge to create a global accountancy business with annual revenues of £5bn. The consolidation on Wall Street also continued with Salomon agreeing to a \$9bn merger with Travelers Group, owner of Smith Barney.

OCTOBER

Martin Taylor decided investment banking was too risky for Barclays, and put BZW up for sale. BZW's chief executive, Bill Harrison, resigned and the rumour mill on Barclays bidding for NatWest started up in earnest. Pressure also grew on NatWest's chairman, Lord Alexander, to follow suit and ditch NatWest Markets.

BT still appeared to be on track with its bid for American telecoms giant MCI. The drive for cross-border mergers, driven by the advent of European monetary union (EMU), gathered pace. BAT announced its intention to split off its financial services side and merge it with Zurich Insurance, in a deal worth £27bn.

The tenth anniversary of the Great Crash of 19 October 1987 came and went without a murmur on the markets. But the Asian currency crisis, which started with the devaluation of the Thai currency, gathered pace. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng index fell 18 per cent in a week and then recovered, spurring talk of a "white knuckle ride", and Gordon Brown watched share prices dive as he switched on the Stock Exchange's new order-driven dealing system, Sets.

NOVEMBER

BT's bid for MCI was blown away by WorldCom's knock-out offer. BT sold its stake in MCI for a healthy profit. Interest rates rose to 10.25 per cent.

Credit Suisse bought BZW's corporate finance and equities businesses at a knock-down price, prompting criticism of Martin Taylor and BZW's launched its hostile bid of £41m for Care First. Mercedes-Benz was forced to withdraw its "Baby Benz" after the car overturned in a test designed to simulate an elk crossing the road.

Merrill Lynch snapped up Mercury Asset Management for £3bn. Ann Iverson resigned from Laura Ashley after a series of profit warnings.

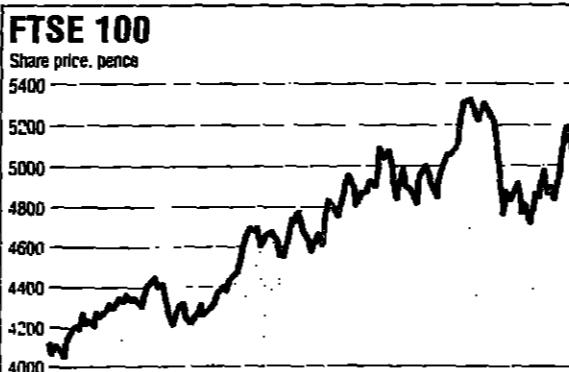
Gordon Brown's Green Budget provided few thrills. The replacement of PEPs with Individual Savings Accounts (ISA) drew criticism for its ceiling of £50,000.

The financial crisis in Japan deepened with the £14.9bn collapse of Yamaichi Securities. South Korea accepted a \$60bn rescue package from the IMF.

DECEMBER

Two of Switzerland's "Big Three" banks, UBS and SBC, agreed to merge, prompting forecasts of a "jobs bloodbath" for their investment banking arms in London. NatWest sold its investment banking side to Deutsche Morgan Grenfell and Bankers Trust. NatWest continued to hold out against a merger with Barclays. Ginger-haired DJ Chris Evans shocked the nation by raising £85m to buy Virgin Radio.

The usual Christmas shopping boom failed to materialise, and retailers started preparing for a sale of £5bn of unsold goods in the new year. The FTSE 100 ended its penultimate full day of trading yesterday at 5,132.3, a 25.8 per cent rise, while the pound looked set to end the year at DM2.97, up 13 per cent.



stock market debut. But the joy was short-lived as the newly formed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) raised base rates another 0.25 per cent to 4.5 per cent. It was the first time since 1945 that rates have been changed without government interference.

Lord MacLaurin bowed out as chairman of Tesco after 38 years with the company. Other departures – some planned, some not – included Martin Owen, who was ousted as chief executive of NatWest Markets, casting doubt on the investment bank's future. Bill Cockburn quit as chief executive of WH Smith after just 18 months in the job.

Energy Group, owner Eastern Electricity, was snapped up by PacifiCorp of the US for £3.7bn. The Government blocked the Bass/Carlsberg-Tetley takeover and shares soared in Hong Kong as the curtain came down on British rule.

The first signs of the growing economic crisis in the Far East emerged as Thailand was forced to turn to the International Monetary Fund for an financial rescue package. JULY

The month kicked off with Gordon Brown's first Budget. The centrepiece was the £5bn welfare to work programme, funded by the windfall tax on privatised utilities. But the abolition of tax credits on dividends

was a blow to pension funds and left millions facing higher pension contributions.

Woolwich became the latest building society to turn into a bank, bringing an average windfall of almost £2,300 for 2.5 million members. But Nationwide successfully repelled calls from Michael Harden, a freelance builder, to demutualise. Interest rates edged up again to 6.75 per cent.

On the corporate front, Burton, the menswear group, announced plans to merge with Debenhams. Bernard Arnault launched another raid on GrandMet's shares in his bid to block the £23bn merger with Guinness.

The first signs of the growing economic crisis in Asia emerged as Thailand was forced to turn to the International Monetary Fund for an financial rescue package.

AUGUST

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, highlighted the Government's tough new competition policy, by referring to PacifiCorp's £3.7bn bid for Energy Group to the MMC.

Sam Chisholm, the chief executive of

BSkyB, bowed out on a low note as the shares fell on disappointing results. Troubled times too for Ann Iverson, Laura Ashley's embattled chief executive, who announced the closure of two factories and predicted a £4.5m loss for the half year.

BT renegotiated the terms of its merger with Care First. The deal was cut from £4.5bn to £3.5bn.

The FTSE 100 index broke through the 5,000 barrier for the first time but August ended with the stock market tumbling around the world as the growing economic crisis in Asia raised the spectre of a crash. The MPC decided to raise interest rates another quarter point to 7 per cent.

SEPTEMBER

Richard Clothier, chief executive of Daberry, the Winalot and Felix pet food business, left his job, paying the price for the group's dismal performance.

The IMF's annual economic forecast said the world economy was in its best shape for a decade and praised Britain.

Coopers & Lybrand and Price Water-

Ionica stages a recovery but still has a long way to go

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Any share which more than doubles in the seven trading days of Christmas should have enjoyed a truly joyful ride.

But not Ionica, which climbed from 60p to close at 134.5p, up a further 1p. It remains desperately short of any festive cheer. For the fledgling telephone group's recovery has to be seen against a horrendous slide - from 421p.

Since a 390p summertime flotation it has persistently dialled the wrong numbers. As the shares weakened the company produced the sort of gloomy statement which rests uneasily with an expected high flyer. Its problems were then compounded by its sudden and unexpected removal from the FTSE 250 index, which forced tracker funds to unload.

The group's discomfort made it an easy target for bear

raiders, who piled on the agony by selling short.

But the stock market is a fickle place. As the bears retired with their profits the telephone group's directors appeared as buyers. The long retreat was over.

During the slide there was wild talk that the group was in danger of breaching its banking covenants and was facing a show-down with institutions. Such suggestions were hotly denied and with more than £200m in the bank, seemed absurd.

But Ionica faces problems and was clearly overpriced in the summer. It has admitted its national roll-out is nine months behind schedule and teething troubles are restricting capacity and limiting customer sign-ups.

The rest of the market, in yet another round of thin trad-

ing, scored modest gains which, of course, will help year-end portfolio valuations. Footsie, after 32.4 points, ended 1919 up at 5,132.3. The supporting indices also made headway.

Today's Footsie calculations are, for the first time, to be adjusted by the Stock Exchange if its final prices are not representative. The decision to fix year-end prices used for portfolio valuations, is a clear indication that even the Exchange is prepared to concede the shortcomings of its new order-driven trading system. With many funds using quarterly valuations it would follow the Exchange should carry out price adjustments at least every three months.

Doubts returned about seasonal spending, sending most retailers lower. Marks & Spencer lost 13p to 597p and Tesco 11p to 496p. The cau-

tious nature of Littlewoods' trading statement caused the desultory.

Still Wicks, the do-it-yourself chain, rose 3.5p to 277.5p - the shares have more than doubled since April's low - and MFI, the furniture group, added 7p to 119p.

Buying in a thin market lifted the non-voting shares of the Schroders investment

group 101p to 1,781; the voting stock gained 35p to 1,935p.

Harrison & Crosfield hardened 6.5p to 139p following its US buy and decision to return 5p a share to shareholders. On Friday H&C, under the name of Elementis, switches from the conglomerate to chemical sector.

An IT sector will make its debut on Friday. The signalled constituents have attracted attention. Logica put on 40p to a 1,130p; FI Group rose 17.5p to 932.5p and Lynx 7p to 116.5p. Each reached a new high.

Relegation-threatened Tottenham Hotspur was back to a year's low as worries about coach Christian Gross nudged the shares 1p to 75.5p. In January the price was 138p.

Tullow Oil dipped 5p to 137p after abandoning a Pakistan well; another well tested

TAKING STOCK

Enviromed, the healthcare group, put on the day's best display, surging 55p to 1,935p. A steady stream of small buy orders was responsible.

The buyers believe corporate action will erupt above the price at which the board held negotiations. Share activity on Monday prompted the group to disclose it had held talks with something below 6p the indicated price.

Gartland Whalley & Baker, owner of 27 per cent of bid-threatened Independent Parts, gained 5p to 110.5p.

Parkwood, a facilities management group, held at 46.5p against last year's 65p placing. Two weeks after the shares were hit by a profit warning, chief executive Tony Hewitt increased his stake to 47.9 per cent, buying just under 1 per cent at 45p.

Merrill Lynch expects the demerged Cordiant Communications to achieve profits of £24.1m this year rising to £40.1m in 1999. The shares gained 7p to 108.5p.

Share spotlight

share price, pence



Source: Bloomberg

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (PE) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptional. Other details: E, rights; X, ex-dividend; A, ex-sell; S, suspended; P, Pandy Paid; np, Not Paid; AM, Amended. Date: C, current; G, gross. Source: Bloomberg

Source: Bloomberg

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Stock volume: 395.5m trades 35,559

Gilt's index n/a

Market Leaders Top 20 volumes

Rank	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol
1	8,464,492	Shell Transport	6,838	Brit Energy	4,956
2	4,206,408	BP	6,838	Mitrel	4,066
3	3,895,400	Amoco	4,776	HFT Resources	3,989
4	3,895,400	Castrol	4,776	BP	3,989
5	3,895,400	Holder Holmes	2,950	BP	3,989
6	3,895,400	Hornsea	1,212	BP	3,989
7	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
8	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
9	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
10	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
11	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
12	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
13	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
14	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
15	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
16	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
17	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
18	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
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7	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
8	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
9	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
10	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
11	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
12	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
13	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
14	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
15	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
16	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989
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20	3,895,400	Imperial	1,212	BP	3,989

Market Leaders Top 20 volumes

Rank	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol

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27/UNIT TRUSTS

Foreign Exchange Rates													
Country	Sterling			Dollar									
	Spot	1 month	3 month	Spot	1 month	3 month	Spot	1 month	3 month	Spot	1 month	3 month	D-Mark
UK	10000	25346	25290	0.60463	0.60562	0.60669	0.3375						
Australia	23576	25346	25290	0.59334	0.59334	0.59334	0.3375						
Austria	20249	20615	20549	0.5922	0.5922	0.5922	0.3458						
Belgium	20459	20549	20529	0.5922	0.5922	0.5922	0.3458						
Denmark	23754	23701	23602	0.60543	0.60543	0.60543	0.3079						
EU	1250	11254	11188	0.62220	0.62220	0.62220	0.3079						
Finland	14598	14947	14970	0.61052	0.61052	0.61052	0.3029						
France	89766	89445	89895	0.59003	0.59003	0.59003	0.3458						
Germany	29563	29534	29529	0.7907	0.7907	0.7907	1.0000						
Greece	46767	47043	47554	0.26470	0.26470	0.26470	0.26470						
Hong Kong	12284	12255	12286	0.72020	0.72020	0.72020	0.3275						
Ireland	15857	15556	15556	1.42295	1.42295	1.42295	0.7950						
Italy	29101	29067	28856	1.7855	1.7855	1.7855	0.8128						
Japan	26334	26156	26156	1.26335	1.26335	1.26335	0.72665						
Malaysia	64425	64280	64281	3.39500	3.39500	3.39500	2.7474						
Mexico	13338			6.05600	6.05600	6.05600	4.5072						
Netherlands	33407	33291	33080	2.0147	2.0147	2.0076	1.1224						
New Zealand	28353	28237	28205	0.58289	0.58289	0.58289	1.7177						
Norway	12104	12064	11951	7.3142	7.3142	7.2772	0.80847						
Portugal	30324	30251	30123	1.6317	1.6317	1.6281	1.0222						
Saudi Arabia	62055	61880	61825	3.7505	3.7505	3.7505	2.0945						
Singapore	27728	27778	27798	1.67555	1.67555	1.67570	1.0370						
South Africa	80470	81015	81945	4.95255	4.95255	4.9730	2.7155						
Spain	25052	25037	24926	15152	15152	15127	2.64753						
Sweden	13071	13039	12983	7.9893	7.9893	7.9878	4.4108						
Switzerland	24074	23947	23721	14547	14547	14396	0.8124						
U.S.	16549		10000	0.55855	0.55855	0.55855							

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Bloomberg

Midlands win
title again in
perfect style

Pint and a pizza keeps Marples on his toes

Chris Marples posed for photographs lying back in his seat, holding a pint in one hand and a fag in the other. "It was good enough for Leeds in the Seventies it's good enough for me," he said. "They're drinking and smoking in every picture you see."

It was not a normal portrait of a footballer about to play the biggest game of his career, although no one could accuse the Emley goalkeeper of being conventional. He might have been preparing to face the West Indies as England's wicketkeeper; he has a two-foot steel rod in his leg; there is absolutely no chance of his meeting a curfew before the club's FA Cup third-round tie at West Ham on Saturday.

Throw in the fact that he has been Emley's saviour in two penalty shoot-outs, his nicknames (derived from his bright orange shirt and a, shall we say, full figure) are Tango man or Tellytubby, and that the west Yorkshire club from the Unibond League have never been to the second round before never mind the third, and Marples is a bona fide leading actor in the commodity they call the romance of the Cup.

Marples, 33, joined Emley (population 1,800, average attendance 250) after a broken left leg ended a career that spanned more than 300 League games and spells at Chesterfield, Stockport County, York City and Chesterfield again. A phone call from Ronnie Glavin, Emley's manager, persuaded him to try non-League and this season, particularly in the Cup, he has been outstanding.

In the first round he made

three saves in the penalty shoot-out against Morecambe and two more against Third Division Lincoln City in the last round.

"I have a routine," Marples said. "I watch which corner the players look at first and study the way they run up to the ball. This year it's come off all right, other times I've looked a right fool. I had a terrible penalty record at Chesterfield."

Against Morecambe and Lincoln, Emley had to score goals in the last five minutes

to earn extra time and the shoot-out. Go in to the village and the message is consistent about Saturday's game. West Ham (members 8,000, plus, average attendance 23,000) will probably win but not as easily as they think. Three people were almost word for word the same: "This team never know when they're beaten."

Marples knows more than anyone. His broken leg came when he dived at the feet of a Scunthorpe player three years ago almost to the day. "The lad tried to jump me to be fair," he said, "but my leg

got caught in the turf and collided with his knee, breaking the tibia and fibula. It was very nasty. At the time there wasn't any pain, but 10 minutes later I felt it all right."

Three operations and 18 months trying to get fit proved futile in Football League terms and he will play at Upton Park with a quarter-inch rod running through a bone from the top of his knee to his ankle. Fine, unless he gets a serious injury which would entail smashing the tibia completely to remove a piece of metal that will bend but not break.

"I worried about it at first, but the surgeon says I'll be all right if it's kicked," he said. "I've been advised to have it removed, but at the moment I'm having no pain, so while it's like this I'll keep it in."

Marples, as he admits, did not always show such fortitude. Big things were expected of him when he succeeded Bob Taylor as Derbyshire's wicket-keeper at 19, playing as first choice for the county in 1985 and 1986. He was young, talented, but too keen to go to the bar.

"I was a young lad then and things were coming too a bit too quick. I'd just won the Fourth Division championship with Chesterfield at football and I had too much time on my hands and I like a pint, so... if it had happened a few years later I'd have handled it better."

"I blame myself. There was talk about me going a long way in cricket, but I didn't prepare myself properly for the game. It got to the stage where you have a drink after the game, you drink at the hotel, with the meal, afterwards in the bar.

Marples probably could not change anyway. Even at the start of the current run, which began at Workington on 13 September and will stretch to nine matches at West Ham, he

was out with Barnsley's manager, Geoff Miller and Kim Barnett both had words with me but, being a young lad, you think you know better than anyone else. In some ways I wish I could turn the clock back, but I've had a good football career, enjoyed my life."

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up here on Friday, go to the pub with him and he'll drive me down to the match on Saturday morning, but I don't think Ronnie would like that. So Friday night in London I've got to find a nice garlic pizza. And some beers."

At least he will have a presence in the penalty area on Saturday and he expects he is going to need it. "Realistically, we've got no chance. In the old days you used to get more shocks, but now I think the Pre-

mership is pulling away from the rest. Our attitude will be that we've got to enjoy the day. We're not a kicking side, we'll try to play them at football and hope we don't get slaughtered."

"When I came to here I never thought I'd play a Third Division side again never mind the Premier League. If we get beaten five, six or seven, I'll still enjoy it."

As Marples points out, the omens are not promising. Both, a dislocated shoulder

and his broken leg came in the last two Januaries he played, but at least someone is optimistic. Under the Welfare Ground main stand some one had gone to the trouble to change the lettering on the official notice board. It read: "Emley FC welcomes the directors and officials of West Ham FC to the FA Cup replay. 14 January, 1998."

If it happens no one will enjoy the occasion more than Marples.

Chris Marples: "We're not a kicking side, we'll try to play West Ham at football and hope we don't get slaughtered"

Photograph: Ben Duffy

RUGBY UNION

Campbell to miss European decider

Schiffer wins aft slow start

Stewart Campbell, the Scotland lock, will miss Caledonia Reds' European qualifying decider with Glasgow on Sunday after failing to recover from a calf injury sustained against South Africa earlier this month.

The Dundee High second-row's place goes to Watsonians' Jason White, the 19-year-old who played in the early part of the Reds' European Cup campaign this season.

The coach, Ian Rankin, has made five changes overall, including two positional, from the last district championship match against Edinburgh in late October.

String County's increasingly impressive James McLaren gets the chance to further his international claims at centre, with Shaun Longstaff moving to the wing and David Officer

dropping to the bench. John Manson also comes in at loose-head prop, with Willie Anderson switching to tight head at the expense of Sandy Penman, who moves to the bench.

Rankin has resisted the temptation to pitch the international hooker Kevin McKenize back into the fray from the start, leaving him on the bench in favour of Gavin Scott.

String team-mate

Bob Flockhart is fully fit, though, after missing his club's game at Edinburgh Academicals last weekend and takes his place alongside the Scotland captain Rob Wainwright in the back row.

Caledonia must beat Glasgow in Aberdeen to be sure of their place in next season's European Cup. Otherwise they will have to rely on the Scottish Borders failing to win with sufficient

tries in Edinburgh to pass their own total.

Edinburgh have sprung a surprise by including the New Zealander John Walters in their team to face Scottish Borders at Inverleith. The strong-running Walters has been in top form for Boroughmuir and confirmed his readiness for a district call-up with an impressive display against Watsonians last Saturday.

Among the forwards, the Boroughmuir hooker Kevan Allan comes in for the injured Grant McKelvey, while another New Zealander, Cameron Mather, is preferred to Graham Dall at open-side flanker.

Kevan looks as if he has recovered from the injury that prevented him going to New Zealand with the Silver Thistles, while Cameron is full of running at the moment," Easson said.

When Worcester play Bristol in Sunday's Tetley Cup it is likely to be the prelude to a couple of meetings in the Allied Dunbar Premiership next season - even though the clubs are two leagues apart at the moment.

Worcester are high-fliers in *Jewson National One* (effectively Premiership Three), while Bristol look doomed to be relegated for Premiership Two.

Les Cusworth, the former England stand-off and national coach, believes his Worcester team are well prepared for the step up.

"There is half the season to go yet, but we are four points clear in second place. We made a big step when we won at Leeds last weekend," Cusworth said.

Worcester are accustomed to being promoted, too. "When we went up unbeaten last season

before I joined the club it was our fourth promotion in seven years," he added. "But we're not getting carried away. Only a few months ago we were playing low-grade rugby."

Worcester have the money, the resources and a huge catchment area west of Birmingham in previously untapped territory as far as first-class rugby goes. There has been speculation about which will be the next club to taste top-flight rugby for the first time.

In 1998, though, it will not be the Premiership Two teams Rotherham, Exeter or one of Cusworth's old clubs, Wakefield. They linger below half-way.

So the tempting prospect remains that Worcester could jump into Premiership Two and, if still successful, be playing Premiership One in 1999.

Cusworth on the cusp of a breakthrough

Cusworth joined on 1 August, having made the decision when on tour with England in Argentina. "Jack Rowell has visited me and said that I've got the best job in rugby. We have a five-year plan, and Worcester now reminds me of Leicester 20 years ago," Cusworth said.

Two decades ago Leicester were poised to become England's top team in a spell when Cusworth masterminded a hat-trick of cup wins as an unorthodox free spirit in midfield. Leicester also won the first league title in 1988 with Cusworth as leader.

The Yorkshireman has been given a free hand to galvanise Worcester by local businessman Cecil Duckworth, whose investment has already amounted to £1.3m, a sum matched by a Lottery grant to improve

facilities. "But this club is not about facilities, though we are proud of our development. It is about people," Cusworth said.

Bristol, meanwhile, have put six of their senior squad on the transfer list as part of their radical restructuring plans. The England Under-21 prop Andy Collins, South-west hooker Jim Dickin, former Welsh youth full-back Steffan Jones, hooker Simon Gully, wing Nathan Millet and Combined Services back row Chris Moore are all available.

Bristol have gleaned one victory from their eight league outings this season. Last Saturday they suffered their heaviest 15-man home defeat at the hands of league leaders Newcastle and today face a tough task against Harlequins at The Stoop.

- Terry Cooper

DARTS

Smith fights off Spiolek and lines up Taylor

Schiffer wins aft slow start

Dennis Smith lined up a meeting with odds-on favourite Phil Taylor for a quarter-final place in the World Championship at Purfleet yesterday. The Swindon man rallied from a set down to beat Kevin Spiolek 3-1 and faces the top-seeded Taylor, winner for the last three years, in the Group

A decider tomorrow evening. Spiolek resisted briefly when he won the first two legs of the fourth set, but Smith moved up a gear to win the next three.

John Lowe, the former world champion, was the first big name to be eliminated when he was beaten 3-0 by the Canadian

Gary Mawson. Lowe was also beaten 3-0 by Peter Manley in his opening group match.

The American, Steve Brown, had the highest check-out so far, with 161 in his first set against Harry Robinson, but he only struggled home 3-2 after winning the first two sets.

ATHLETICS

Embarrassed Kipketer in UK visa fiasco

Wilson Boit Kipketer, the Kenyan world 3,000 metres steeplechase champion has withdrawn from this Saturday's County Durham International Cross-Country after failing to renew his visa to enter the United Kingdom.

It's embarrassing for everyone, the athlete, his management team and even ourselves," the race director, Nigel Gough, said. "Perhaps in the future we will insist on agents faxing a photocopy of their runners' passports showing their visas are up to date."

Gough denied Boit Kipketer had pulled out of the meeting as a result of former Olympic 10,000 metre gold medallist Khalid Skah being given a late entry into the race.

He rebuffed suggestions that Kenyans are reluctant to compete against the Moroccan. Skah controversially won his 1992 title after allegedly using a lapped colleague to pacemake him to victory against another Kenyan, Richard Chelimo.

Paul Parker, the former West Ham mid-fielder, is hoping for a move into management after holding talks with the League of Ireland side Cork Ramblers.

Allen, 32, now at Portsmouth, has been given permission to approach his manager, Terry Fenwick.

Carl Asaba, the Reading striker, is to appeal against his sending-off at Queen's Park Rangers in the first half of last Saturday's 2-1 win.

The French player Christian Karoumou has been transferred to Real Madrid from Sampdoria. The Spanish club will pay Sampdoria approximately £2.4m for the midfielder.

Paul Parker, the former England de-

fender, yesterday agreed to join the

new Cork side, Ramblers.

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SPORTING DIGEST

Basketball

WING 2 YEWEL D. Exhibition Match: Real Madrid-Adetco Madrid XI 4 (Real 4, Baker 2, Moro 2, Montes 2, Juninho 7) Spanish Al. 2000-01.

21 P. Vizcaino (R) 20.03.98; 22 A. Fattori (R)

20359; 23 S. Krauss (Set) 2/04/98; 24 L. S. 20/04/98; 25 M. G. 20/04/98; 26 L. G. 20/04/98; 27 A. Kof (R) 20/04/98; 27 X. Glez (Set) 2/04/98; 28 F. Cavigli (R) 2/04/98; 29 A. Bazzucchi (Soviet) 20/04/98; 30 M. G. 20/04/98; 31 P. Cavigli (R) 2/04/98; 32 A. D. 20/04/98; 33 P. Orlebs (Aut) 2/04/98; 34 L. Galt (R)

2/04/98; 35 D. Prete (R) 2/04/98; 36 E. Po-

2/04/98; 37 M. Hermann (Swe) 2/05/98; 38 J. Haski (Lithu) 2/05/98; 39 Y. Tchatchou (Uganda) 2/05/98; 40 J. C. Tchatchou (Uganda) 2/05/98; 41 A. P. 2/05/98; 42 A. P. 2/05/98; 43 C. M. 2/05/98; 44 C. M. 2/05/98; 45 D. Dennerle (Fr) 2/05/98; 46 K. M. 2/05/98; 47 A. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 48 P. Accola (Swe) 2/05/98; 49 A. Hoffmann (Swe) 2/05/98; 50 A. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 51 P. Accola (Swe) 2/05/98; 52 A. Hoffmann (Swe) 2/05/98; 53 A. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 54 W. Franz (Aut) 2/05/98; 55 K. A. Aszkenasy (Nor) 5/5; 56 J. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 57 D. Dennerle (Fr) 2/05/98; 58 J. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 59 A. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 60 J. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 61 G. Gruber (Aut) 5/5; 62 F. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 63 P. Runggaldier (Aut) 2/05/98; 64 W. Franz (Aut) 2/05/98; 65 D. Dennerle (Fr) 2/05/98; 66 J. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 67 W. Franz (Aut) 2/05/98; 68 B. Strobl (Aut) 2/05/98; 69 K. A. Aszkenasy

31/TELEVISION & RADIO

THE INDEPENDENT
WEDNESDAY 31 DECEMBER 1997

31

Warn union
on Goulding

TODAY'S PICK

Decisive Moments: Images From the News 1997 (7.30pm BBC2) It's been a bad year for photography. After a curtain car crash in Paris underpass, the profession was lucky to pull through as a befuddled public sought camera-wielding scap-guys. This is a detached look at the snags which made this year's news – from the rescue of round-the-world

yachtsman Tony Bullimore, to the raid on the Frankfurt offices of her employer by Nicola Horlick. Diana, Princess of Wales walking down lamppost alley and Swampy grinning from his tunnel. The film has a refreshing amorality which serves to reinstate the proper function of news photography as social record while gently highlighting public hypocrisy about newspapers.

The World in 1998 (4.50pm BBC2) An expansive Peter Snow waves his arms about and points us in the direction of next year's news. The first bits of the first ever international space station head upwards. El Niño will cause havoc in the southern hemisphere, the World Cup arrives on digital TV. Not forgetting the single currency and the Jubilee Line extension. And self-adhesive stamps...



Tragedy in Paris: 'Images from the News 1997', BBC2

BBC1

7.00 News; Regional News; Weather (7) (2255437).
7.30 Children's BBC: Paddington Peas (R) (2653219). 7.45 Telebuties (S) (2642525). 7.40 The Busy World of Richard Scarry (R) (S) (3262561). 8.05 Casper Classics (7) (6497306). 8.30 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest (R) (6997521). 8.55 Newsround 97 (S) (T) (9706035). 9.30 Sweet Valley High (R) (S) (1125698). 9.50 Telebuties (S) (970564).
10.20 News; Weather; Regional News (7) (6562657).
10.30 Film: The Nutcracker Prince (Paul Schrader 1990 US). Uninspired animated version of the Christmas classic telling the tale of a young girl's dreams of adventures in a magical land. The London Philharmonic liven things up with a spot of Tchaikovsky. (S) (T) (1556054).
11.40 Cartoon (222025). 12.10 Keeping Up Appearances (R) (S) (11501). 12.30 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook (S) (31851). 1.00 News; Weather; Regional News (7) (6562657). 1.15 Neighbours (S) (T) (7306550). 1.35 Cartoon (1781207).
1.45 Film: Bugsy Malone (Alan Parker 1976 US). Scott Baio, Dolly Parton and a cast of kids have a riot in Alan Parker's gangster movie spoof musical (S) (T) (700603).
3.35 Film: Back to the Future, Part III (Robert Zemeckis 1990 US). The concluding part of the entertaining time-travelling trilogy – not a patch on the original but far superior to its lamentable predecessor, *Marty McFly* (Michael J Fox) travels to the American Wild West of 1885 in a desperate bid to save Doc Brown (Christopher Lloyd) from becoming another victim of the black-hatted varmint gunslingers Buford Tannen, a distant relative of the evil and rather stupid Biff. (S) (T) (5952570).
5.05 Neighbours (S) (T) (6784238).
5.30 News; Weather (7) (138967).
5.45 Regional News; Weather (7) (492677).
6.00 Film: K-9 (Rod Daniel 1989 US). Comic action-adventures starring James Belushi are generally best left alone and this is no exception. Here he plays an obnoxious copper who is teamed with an Alsatian police dog in an effort to crack a drug ring. With sadly unimpressive results (S) (3496238).
7.35 Wolf: A Wildlife Special. David Attenborough continues his one-man celebration of 40 years of wildlife film-making by the BBC Natural History Unit. This documentary investigates the true nature of wolves. (S) (T) (634783).
8.25 News; Regional News; Weather (7) (210141).
8.45 The National Lottery Draw (S) (T) (375702).
9.00 Cold Enough for Snow. Jack Rosenthal's follow up to *Eskimo Day* about the emotional crisis experienced by two families when their children leave for university (S) (T) (1870).
10.30 The Unique Dave Allen. The comedian introduces clips of his funnier, younger self (S) (21988).
11.00 The End of the Year Show with Angus Deayton (S) (688342).
12.05 Happy New Year (S) (6761212). 12.30 Hogmanay Live (S) (6987555).
1.00 Film: Carry On At Your Convenience (Gerald Thomas 1971 UK). Sid James and Hattie Jacques fail to carry a leaden trade union effort from the 'Carry On' team. (T) (16081).
2.30 7.00 John's BBC News 24 (484571).
REGIONS: NI 4.55 - 6.00 Newsline Scotland 5.45 Reporting Scotland; Weather 6.00 Wolf: A Wildlife Special 6.50 Only Fools and Horses 7.45 - 8.25 The Hospital That Jack Built 8.00 Button Box Wizard 9.15 Ex-S 9.45 Elaine with Attitude 10.35 McCoist and MacAuley 11.15 Only an Excuse? 11.45 Hogmanay Live 1.05 The End of the Year Show with Angus Deayton

BBC2

6.55 Going Hollywood (R) (S) (2186702). 8.10 Great Mysteries and Myths of the Twentieth Century (5583870).
8.35 Film: Vivacious Lady. (George Stevens 1938 US). Ginger Rogers is the woman in question, a wild New York nightclub singer who is wed impulsively by James Stewart's young professor. An entertaining comedy which is pleasant enough if you happen to be up at this ungodly hour – worth watching for Stewart's conservative father, an excellent Charles Coburn (9344722).
10.05 The Great Romances of the Twentieth Century (746477).
10.30 Film: The Shop Around the Corner. (Ernst Lubitsch 1940 US). Director Ernst Lubitsch guides this wonderful romantic comedy expertly, allowing James Stewart and Margaret Sullivan room to breathe as a blustering salesgirl and male shop assistant who are unaware they are lonely hearts apart. A minor classic with Stewart's glorious seriousness a joy to behold (8715303).
12.05 Close-Up on James Stewart (S) (6894702).
12.15 Top Gear Rally Report (S) (116054).
12.45 Cambridge Folk Festival (S) (225253).
1.25 The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures – the Magical Maze (S) (T) (2803006).
2.25 The Travel Show (S) (9284257).
3.10 Garth Brooks Live in Central Park (R) (S) (2006431).
4.20 Everything to Play For (S) (9230348).
4.50 The World in 1998. See Today's Pick, above (S) (1804970).
5.50 Close-Up on James Stewart. Memories of James Stewart. (S) (606219).
6.00 Film: Bend of the River (Anthony Mann 1952 US). In many critics' eyes, director Mann's finest Western – a glorious frontier adventure about a reformed outlaw (James Stewart) who is hired to accompany a wagon train on the dangerous journey to Oregon in the 1840s. When he encounters a former partner who is still on the wrong side of the law (Arthur Kennedy) he finds his loyalty tested (T) (95219).
7.30 Decisive Moments: Images from the News 1997. See Today's Pick, above (S) (T) (84696).
8.30 Flatworld. Animation by director Daniel Greaves who wins the Oscars when Nick Park has a year off. This cops-and-robbers comedy looks 38-year-old Greaves four years and follows the trials and tribulations of a misunderstood cat called Groat, a fish called Chips and their accident-prone owner, Matt Phllatt. (R) (S) (T) (2141).
9.00 Shooting Stars. Reeves and Mortimer re-host last year's Christmas special with Ewan Bremner, Janivs Cocker ('the weed inbweed') and Ian Kelsey, while Vic has another chance to rub his thighs at a pregnant Emma Forbes (R) (S) (378257).
9.35 The Fast Show. Nothing new, just last year's Crimbo special again (R) (S) (T) (124699).
10.20 Stella Street. Glorious soap celebrity soap set in Surbiton (S) (T) (741677).
10.30 Film: Official Dental (Brian Trencher-Smith 1993 US). TVM sci-fi thriller about a man convinced that he has been the victim of an extraterrestrial kidnapping but is unable to convince the authorities – or his wife – of his story (funny that). But when a UFO crash-lands near his home, he is called upon to try to communicate with the alien occupant ... Hrmnn (S) (3758696).
11.55 Jools's Fifth Annual Hootenanny. BB King, the Fun Lovin' Criminals and Gabrielle drop in on Mr Holland (S) (T) (256325).
13.15 The Best of Glastonbury 97 (S) (2595994). To 2.35am

ITV

6.00 GMTV (212934).
9.25 Children's Club (R) (S) (6222141). 9.45 London Today (7) (747578). 10.00 Breakfast (S) (78515). 10.30 Camp Nowhere (Jonathan Prince 1994 US). LaMie family comedy about a group of children who decide to set up their own summer camp (S) (T) (97957073).
12.20 Your Shout (9865764). 12.30 News: Weather (T) (577058). 12.55 London Today (T) (2917696).
1.30 Masters of Illusion (R) (52437239). 1.55 ITN News Headlines (T) (27490367).
2.00 Film: Hoosiers (David Anspaugh 1986 US). A half-decent sports drama with Gene Hackman as a new basketball coach who arrives in a small Indiana town which cares a little too much about the fortunes of the local high-school team. An Oscar-nominated Dennis Hopper plays a local misfit and ex-player whom Hackman rehabilitates by hiring as his assistant. (T) (93446325).
4.30 Diana – the Week the World Stood Still. Stood still? How about 'Went barking mad and lost all sense of perspective' (T) (87195162).
4.40 News; Weather (T) (143899).
5.00 London Tonight (S) (T) (670).
5.30 London Tonight Uncut (S) (122).
7.00 Emmerdale (S) (T) (1412).
7.30 Coronation Street. Deirdre makes an appalling discovery about Jon – which is sure to prompt one of her rather unsettling imitations of a chewing tortoise (T) (306).
8.00 Des O'Connor Tonight. The Woolpackers perform their line-dancing extravaganza 'Cheeky Boogie'. You have been warned (S) (2615).
9.00 Film: Danielle's Perfect Stranger (Michael Miller 1994 US). It's probably best to keep it that way (S) (T) (5775151).
10.45 ITN News: Weather (T) (937948).
11.00 Happy New Year – Live from Edinburgh's Hogmanay. Anthea Turner and Philip Schofield live from Edinburgh's Hogmanay (93509).
12.30 Film: Mackenna's Gold (J Lee Thompson 1983 US). Surprise-free Western adventure in which Gregory Peck plays a sheriff entrusted with a treasure map by a dying Indian. Unlikely for him, the world and his uncle get wind of this, including Oran Sharri's kidnap-happy Mexican bandit. Support comes from Telly Savalas and Julie Newmar (3374710).
2.55 Rockmania (S) (6856730).
3.55 Film: A Little of What You Fancy (Robert Webb 1988 UK). Documentary on the music hall, featuring popular songs performed by notables such as Stanley Holloway, Helen Shapiro, Lily Mmons and John Rutland. (8318062).
5.05 The Borrowers in the Making (6054772).
5.30 Children's ITV: Talespin (R) (S) (4553265).
5.55 ITN Morning News (2504604). To 8am

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Sesame Street (S) (6540325). 7.05 The Babysitters' Club (R) (8229898). 8.00 The Big Breakfast (S) (78515). 10.00 Zig and Zag's Big Morning: Happy Days (R) (59342). 10.30 Zig and Zag's Big Morning: Saved by the Bell: Wedding in Las Vegas (R) (S) (T) (139567).
11.00 Zig and Zag's Big Morning: Moesha (R) (S) (3615). 11.30 Zig and Zag's Big Morning: The Monkees (R) (525035). 12.05 Zig and Zag's Big Morning: Coming with... (S) (2064783). 12.35 Zig and Zag's Big Morning: Eddie, Indiana (R) (T) (6777699).
1.00 Astronauts. An antidote to the recent Equinox programme on the disastrous Mir space station as cameras follow the crew of the Endeavour space shuttle (T) (52344).
2.00 A Woman of Substance. Third and final part (R) (T) (705832).
3.55 A Little Something. Short animation about women's envoys (R) (S) (9237851).
4.00 Bewitched (655).
4.30 Countdown. Dick Whirley and Carol Vorderman present another 30 minutes of comfort television (S) (T) (219).
5.00 Film: The Apartment. See Today's Film, above (T) (781253).
7.20 Creature Comforts. You've seen the gas advert and you must have seen the original at least once by now, but Nick Park's Oscar-winning animation, featuring animated clay figures living in a zoo, remains a work of genius and a comic treat (R) (T) (450299).
7.30 Things to Come. The 'Growing up With Four' strand offers this guide to the contrasting visions of the future. *The Independent's* David Aaronsmith gathers together the technofuturists (a kind euphemism for anal-retentive australians) who believe that technology will overcome all problems; the continuity team who believe that politics, culture and human nature will shape our future (New hippies); and the catastrophists who reckon that the future will be filled with jumpl, global conflict and biological weaponry (everyone else). (T) (79754).
8.30 Brookside. 'Will Ron's date with May be a success?' A date with Ron Dixon is, by definition, not a success – unless he doesn't turn up, of course (S) (T) (45059).
9.00 Max Headroom. A personal favourite of C4's first Chief Exec Jeremy Isaacs (so we're told), an irritating computer-creation strangely popular in the early 1980s. This sci-fi drama about a TV newsgathering team in a dystopian future society dominated by electronic media explores the chatter and sledge-hammer wit of Max Headroom, a computer-animation with a mind of its own, who provides commentary and advice to his alter-ego, Edison Carter, the team's star reporter. (7889232).
10.10 Adam and Joe's Fourmatters Years. Some of the more obscure moments from the first 15 years of Channel Four are pulled to pieces by pop-culture junkies Adam Burton and Joe Cornish. Your chance to revisit *The Hot Gossip Show*, *Moondchild* and *The Confessions of Felix Krull* if you feel the need (T) (152832).
11.00 TPI 1998. Chris Evans hosts a live edition of the talk show, with Des Lynam, Frank Skinner, Jo Guest and Melinda Messenger, and live performances from Mark Owen, Chumbawumba and Ocean Colour Scene. (S) (479054).
12.15 Under the Moon (1435208). 4.30 Lumberjacks OK? (R) (88888). 5.00 - 6.00 Meat-loaf: Live in the Neighbourhood (R) (S) (58130). To 8am

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Dappledown Farm (R) (7652035).
6.30 The Wind in the Willows (62351160).
6.50 Mr Men and Little Miss (S) (30143073).
7.00 Wimpy's House (3803293). 7.30 Alvin and the Chipmunks (R) (8653590). 8.00 Havakazoo (R) (S) (7407257). 8.30 Adventures of the Bush Patrol (R) (S) (8857788). 9.00 Stickin' Around (R) (8657590). 9.30 Washbone (R) (T) (123764).
10.00 Enid Blyton – Secret of Killmoor. A mad reclusive in the forest of Killmoor hatches an evil plot... (S) (37550509).
11.00 Animal Xtremes (90501815). 12.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (T) (1257734).
12.30 Family Affairs (S) (T) (1217580). 1.00 5 News Update (S) (88469870). 1.05 Rad Surfing the Volcano (S) (13778783).
1.25 Knight Rider (262702).
2.00 Film: Biggles (John Hough 1986 UK). A groovy eighties update for Captain WE John's flying hero, played here with panache by Neil Dickson. It's essentially a light-headed fantasy drama about a New York City fast-food entrepreneur (Alex Hyde-White) who is dragged back in time to World War II at unexpected moments, at which point he gets into scrapes with his 'Time Twin', the flying ace Biggles, on the Western Front (6250431).
4.20 Hercules: the Legendary Journeys. Hercules battles the power-hungry Perseus (R) (2266073).
5.00 Hercules: the Legendary Journeys. Iolus's pride and arrogance cause him to be sentenced to death by the gods. Harsh but fair (R) (1293656).
6.00 100 Per Cent. Three contestants, playing in isolation, face 100 testing general-knowledge questions (S) (4380257).
6.30 Family Affairs. Roy is depressed. Maria celebrates the end of the worst 12 months of her life. There is still no sign of a reconciliation for Chris and Annie. And you thought you'd had a rough year... (S) (T) (4371509).
7.00 Sabrina the Teenage Witch. Feature-length episode – the one in which her parents take a year's sabbatical and our Sabrina moves with her aunt (3513702).
8.45 5 News. (285895).
9.00 Film: Murder by Death (Robert Moore 1976 US). Neil Simon's disappointing take on *Murder on the Orient Express* sends up some famous fictional detectives, including Charlie Chan, Miss Marple, Sam Spade and Hercule Poirot. Despite a heavy-weight comic cast (Peter Sellers, David Niven, Maggie Smith, Alec Guinness) it's a bit of a mess as the five sleuths try to prove who is the greatest detective of them all (32165528).
10.50 La Femme Nikita. Operations' nippier is involved in a plot to sell important missile plans to a terrorist. Nikita must foil the plan but save the son. (S) (6044219).
11.45 The Jack Docherty Show (8385054).
12.30 Film: The Myth of the Male Orgasm (John Hamilton 1993 Can). So-so Canadian comedy-drama about the conflicts that arise when a staid professor volunteers as a subject in an experiment conducted by some 'wimmin' (8693826).
2.10 Film: Mourning Becomes Electra. (Dudley Nichols 1947 US). A screen version of Eugene O'Neill's cheery adaptation of the Greek tragedy 'Orestie'. With Michael Redgrave and Rosalind Russell (21773739).
4.55 Night Stand (895772).
5.30 100 Per Cent (R) (S) (6617265). To 6am

RADIO

CHOICE



John Shuttleworth's Open House

(11.30pm R4)
A sad end to New Year's Eve, John throwing open his house to celebrity guests, none of whom turn up. Meanwhile, his wife, Mary, and their children are out elsewhere. Of course, if you're listening to this it may mean you have not been invited anywhere yourself, so it may not seem very funny.

8.00 Weather
8.00 The Weather Tonight
8.05 Book at Bedtime. Playback. By Raymond Chandler
8.30 The (Almost) Accidental Adventures of the Book Todd
8.30 TV Dinner
11.30 John Shuttleworth's Open House
See Choice, above

12.00 News
12.00 Late Book. Ghost Stories
12.45 Shopping Forecast
1.00 All World Service
5.00 Ireland Forecast
5.35 - 6.00 Shopping Forecast
Radio 4 LW
(1985-7)
1.00 News
1.30 The Weather
1.45 Short Story: Cut from Under.
5.00 PM
5.30 Weather Forecast
6.00 News
6.30 Crossword
7.00 News
7.30 The Weather
8.00 News
8.30 Weather Forecast
9.00 News
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Ferdinand commits himself to West Ham until 2005

Rio Ferdinand, the rising star of England's defence, has committed himself to West Ham until 2005, and says he "did not have to think twice" about doing so.

Ferdinand, 19, agreed to extend his existing four-year contract by a further three years as part of negotiations to increase his salary following his call-up to the England side against Cameroon last month.

Both player and club believe the new deal will finally put an end to speculation that Manchester United were aiming to sign one of the country's most exciting young prospects on a "pay now, play later" basis.

Across the city at White Hart Lane, two

of the older players were attempting to smooth over the problems caused, in part by Ferdinand's cousin, Les, criticising the club's new Swiss coach, Christian Gross.

Gary Mabbutt believes Gross's imperfect English, and resulting lack of communication, is the root cause of much of the current uncertainty. Mabbutt insists the Spurs players are confident that Gross, despite two significant distractions, will stay at the club and that he will lead them out of relegation trouble.

Tottenham are to appeal against the Department for Education and Employment's decision to deny a work permit to

Gross's chosen fitness trainer, Fritz Schmid, and Gross himself has dismissed suggestions he will leave to become the Swiss national coach as "speculation".

Mabbutt thinks a language problem has resulted in confused and contradictory messages coming out of the club. "Mr Gross's English is perfectly adequate, but at times, in a press conference situation, things can be misunderstood. I understand he was asked the same question in three different ways and maybe what he meant to say was not put as clearly as it could have been.

"Now the position has been clarified, although it has caused a couple of days of

uncertainty, and the players are all convinced that Mr Gross will be staying at the club to see out the end of his contract. We are all working as hard as we can to turn around the situation we are in."

Ferdinand and Darren Anderton, who are both out injured again, expressed concern over Gross's methods, claiming in newspaper interviews that his injuries had been exacerbated by training. However, Colin Calderwood, Tottenham's Scotland defender, told BBC Radio 5 Live: "Les and Darren, especially with the amount of time they have been out, have come back and now seem to be out again for hopefully not

more than two or three weeks. That makes them unhappy and that's obviously where the stories have come from."

Gary Speed's position at Goodison Park continues to be in question, with Sheffield Wednesday offering £25m plus a player, believed to be Jim Magilton, for the Everton captain. The offer improves on one of £4.5m from Newcastle. Good news for Everton is that the French striker Mickaël Madar has completed his free transfer from the Spanish club Deportivo La Coruña.

Manchester City have denied that Newcastle United have made a £12m offer - made up of £5m and three players - for

Georgi Kinkladze. A spokesman said there is "no substance" to the reports.

Ally McCoist may be joining Sunderland from Rangers on loan. The 35-year-old forward is wanted back by the English First Division club where he spent two years before joining Rangers in 1983. He is considering a three-month loan, which could help him secure a place in Scotland's squad for the World Cup finals in France.

Sheffield Wednesday are to have fresh talks with Hajduk Split over the Macedonian international Goce Sedloski, who failed a medical before Christmas.

- Alan Nixon

Palmer picks up the pieces down at Dell

Carlton Palmer's star is an ascendant again, as his resolute performance for Southampton against Chelsea demonstrated.

Phil Coles finds the Saints midfielder in the midst of a resurrection at The Dell.

Carlton Palmer and his Southampton team-mates had been billed as the support act on Monday night when Chelsea were meant to put their championship claims on centre stage. Instead, as the much-criticised former England midfielder ran his legs off, and Chelsea found themselves going nowhere far too often.

Badly missing the suspended Dennis Wise, even the front-line pairing of Mark Hughes and Gianfranco Zola failed to spark Ruud Gullit's side into a positive response to Kevin Davis' early strike.

Gullit, his famed sang-froid for once missing, said his players had been "suicidal" and "stupid", adding that, like a dog, they had to go home and lick their wounds.

Even with five months of the Premiership campaign to go,

those title wounds might now be telling, with Chelsea having dropped seven points - the margin by which they trail Manchester United - in their last four matches.

Palmer added his view as he suggested Gullit's team had not shown the real drive that makes champions. "Chelsea are a super team and if you don't deny them space they'll pass the ball around and murder you," he said. "I wouldn't say we had more commitment, because they worked hard all game and did knock it around."

"So I'm not saying they didn't fight. That would be a lie. They passed it well and perhaps didn't have the luck. But I think we wanted the points more than they did on Monday. That's what it boils down to. That made the difference."

That is a fatal flaw in any side wanting to wrest the title away from Old Trafford, with Southampton now having joined Coventry and Bolton in beating Chelsea. Palmer, however, believes the sheer hard work he and his team-mates put in is something others can repeat, and not only at the expense of Chelsea.

"It's not just Chelsea that you have to do it to," he said. "You've got to do exactly the same against United, Liver-

pool and Arsenal. You have to close them down, especially somebody like Zola. But you have to do that with Steve McManaman, David Beckham and Paul Scholes as well."

"When you're up against players like that you can't let them run. You have to earmark them for special treatment. Zola's one of them."

Palmer's commitment in midfield against Chelsea was exemplary, and the Southampton manager, David Jones, said the player's troubles at Leeds have allowed him to buy a cut-price saviour.

"Carlton's been brilliant since he came to the club," Jones said. "The lad is a winner; he leads by example, and you can't say any more of him. I know that I only got him at the price I did [£1m] because of the problems at Leeds. Otherwise I wouldn't have been able to afford to pick him up. I'm just grateful Ron Atkinson didn't get the Wednesday job six weeks earlier!"

Palmer himself is also grateful, to Jones for resurrecting a career that was fading under George Graham at Elland Road. "It's a great set-up here," he said. "Everybody knows we're not going to win the League. But we're capable of being better than the bottom three."

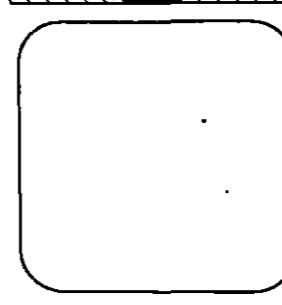
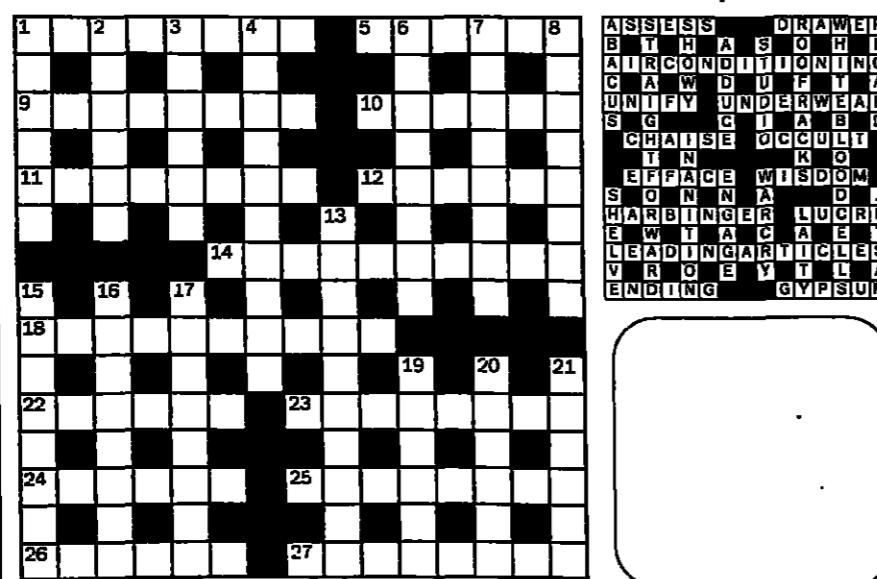
FA Cup countdown, page 29

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3495, Wednesday 31 December 1997

By Aquila

Tuesday's Solution



ACROSS
1 Hoop-la, legitimate thing to exploit (4,4)
5 Lump of bread we butter as starter for a fairy (6)
9 Lagos won, unusually, by defensive errors (3-5)
10 Hide patterns of military display (6)
11 Driving excellent cars... (4-4)
12 ...bought this Roman heavy type (6)
14 Sliced loaf ordered for the mining areas (10)
18 Transparent way to help out in time of trouble, say? (3-7)
22 Composer from Barnoldswick (6)

23 Brick used by law-breaker in the beginning (8)
24 Soldier and caller, mainly, in couples dancing (6)
25 Standard infusion of leaves, mostly for the irregular? (8)
26 Giants - exactly what is needed in bronzes (6)
27 Cautious about boy, daily (8)

DOWN
1 Stir fry, hot and bubbly (6)
2 Cut what is carried up by climber on Gibraltar (6)
3 This artist got it right with a circle (6)
4 Impudent character of Sheridan's so upset (10)

6 The creation, we hear, of a powerful Speaker close to number ten (8)
7 Keep back, using shoulder (8)
8 Cabinet of many titles (8)
13 Challenger's escape route? (6-4)
15 No fast food? (8)
16 Good honest beginners in mixed tennis, once a week (8)
17 Hills in hundreds? (8)
19 Par harnessed slow, mediocre horse (6)
20 An exercise in North America for sickness (6)
21 Mean to provoke youth-leader (6)

© Published by Newspaper Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford
Back issues available from Historic Newspapers, 01998 840370.
Wednesday 31 December 1997
Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

Photograph: Peter Jay

RUGBY UNION

Bath decide to get serious at Saints' expense

Steve Evans

Bath 26

Northampton 3

The panto season is with us and for all but the last frantic 10 minutes its spirits seemed to permeate play at the Recreation Ground yesterday. Until this last period, slapstick had been the favoured mode, not least when Bath decided to punt the ball backwards from one wing to the other, with the recipient, Adeyayo Adebayo, so baffled by the move he could do little but walk the ball into touch.

It was typical of the game until the home side finally decided on a more serious approach and scored a couple of tries. First, the flanker Russell Earnshaw went over after the rangy American No 8 had outpaced the Saints defence. The second try came when the Bath captain, Andy Nicol, crossed. Both tries were converted by Jon Callard to add to his four penalties.

Before the game, the Bath coach, Andy Robinson, had said it was a match that had to be won, and won in style. In the end, he had his way but for much of the game the style simply was not there.

For more than an hour, Northampton had matched Bath in spirit and skill, only conceding the lead through Callard's penalties. Their own not-so-secret weapon, Paul Grayson, had kicked only one penalty because Bath wisely decided to deny him the opportunities.

If there was a turning point, it was in the middle of the second half when Northampton, rampaging forward, won a penalty five metres in front of the posts and opted to run instead of kick. They then discovered exactly how unbuckleable the Bath defence was and from then on they must have realised that victory was beyond them.

Bath looked overwhelming but still retained enough of their old method and class to withstand the buffeting. Mike Catt, in the centre, was impressive in defence and attack, sending down long, ground-devouring kicks to set Northampton back when they were in good attacking positions.

Despite the defeat, Northampton still looked a side transformed from the one that started the season. The beef was there yesterday, not least in the shape of the big Springbok prop Garry Page.

But there was also a steel present that was missing earlier. It is a long time since Northampton looked as fierce in the front five as Bath but so it was yesterday: the Saints continually battered away in what used to be called "true Bath style". The second row, Jon Phillips and Jason Chandler, loomed large.

The difficulty for the Saints coach, Ian McGeechan, is that all this effort and all this money on imports such as Jon Sleightholme from Bath still was not enough to do the trick. Gregor Townsend, in the centre, had a good day, conjuring the occasional moment of unpredictable magic from nothing. However, in the face of a defence such as Bath's his efforts were doomed to fail.

The difficulty for Northampton - and the joy for Bath - is that a professional rugby success breeds money, and money breeds more success. Bath may look unlikely to win the league, but the European Cup awaits them. For Northampton, the question is how can a small town produce big-money rugby?

Bath: Three penalties, Nicol, Callard 2, Penalties Callard 4. Northampton: Penalty Grayson.
Bath: C. Callard; E. Evans, P. de Glanville, M. A. Nicol (capt), K. Yule (J. Makinson, A. Phillips, V. Ubogu, G. Liars, N. Rodman, R. Earmshaw, H. Webster, J. Peacock, D. Lyle, Northampton: J. Townsend, J. Sleightholme, G. Townsend, A. Northey, H. Thompson, G. Grayson (I. Hunter, B. J. Brannah); G. Peacock, A. Phillips, J. Townsend, J. Phillips, J. Chandler, T. Rodger (capt).
Referee: R. Hughes (Manchester).

THE INDEPENDENT
SPORTS CALENDAR ON 2 JANUARY

For those who read their paper

thirst ot xbad
there's only one advertiser in today's Independent.

مكتبة من الأصل